

PHAETON:
O R,
The Fatal Divorce.
A
TRAGEDY.

As it is Acted at the THEATRE ROYAL.

I N

Imitation of the ANTIENS.

*With some Reflections on a Book call'd, a Short View of the Immorality
and Profaneness of the English Stage.*

*Principibus placuisse Viris non ultima Laus est. Hor. lib. Epist. 1. Elst. 17.
Non ego ventosæ Plebis Suffragia venor. Lib. eodem: Ep. 19.*

L O N D O N,

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TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE
CHARLES MONTAGUE, Esq;

Chancellor of the *Exchequer*,
One of the Lords of the Treasury, and One of His
Majesty's most Honourable Privy Cotuncil, &c.

SIR,

I Have, methinks, a sort of Right to your Patronage for this Play, since to you alone I owe the Power of writing it; for it was YOU alone, by the most generous Action in the World, and done in the most generous and engaging Manner, that deliver'd me from Misfortunes that might else have oppress'd me, and made me incapable of all Attempts of this Nature. And that Satisfaction a Poet finds in the Success of his Endeavours, I receive with infinite Additions, since it gives me an Opportunity of owning in Public the uncommon Obligations I have to Mr. MONTAGUE's Generosity. Our Acknowledgements and Thanks are All the Returns requir'd of us by Heav'n, and the Poet has no other to make to the Great, who, when dignify'd with your Virtues, Sir, are the true Images of Heav'n. There is a Pain in being Oblig'd to most Men, but there is so Reasonable a Vanity in Receiving a Favour from Mr. Montague (distinct from the Benefit) that we are fond of it, and that exalts the Satisfaction into a pleasure almost equal to the Power of Obliging.

But besides the Duty I am under of laying this Play, Sir, at Your Feet, it brings me this Advantage, that I secure my Self from the Severe Censurers of Dedications, for Flattery here wou'd be an unpardonable Folly as well as Crime, a superfluous Falshood, that wou'd rather weaken, than support the Truth, and so instead of heightning I shou'd only debase the Character, I so much admire.

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When a Poet, indeed, makes so imprudent a Choice, as to throw himself on a Poverty of Desert, he lies under a sort of Necessity of having a Recourse to the Embellishments of his Art; yet then, the Dawk is easily seen thro': For let the Poets pretend to what they please, they can in Reality add no true Lustre to a Piece, that has not an Innate Worth. In spite of their Gilding, the baser Metal will soon appear to a nice Observer. But under this just, and more happy Choice, I have no occasion for Heighthings, no shadow of a Pretence to seek additional, when the Native Beauties are so numerous, and so perfect; to lose Those wou'd be to lose the Likeness in imaginary Charms, and that wou'd be to lose the Value of the Draught, for an Unaccountable and Useless indulgence to Fiction.

Your Easiness of Access; your Affability; your admirable Address in the Dispatch of Business; the Vivacity of your Wit, your Penetration, and true Judgment in Books, Men, and in the most perplexing Affairs, and Exigencies of State; your Candor, Integrity, Justice, and Open Truth, with all the other Virtues, that make YOU, Sir, conspicuous, and your Friends and the Nation happy, are an evident Proof of this. But to shew the Advantages that Particulars, as well as the Public, receive from them every day, wou'd make a Volume of this Epistle, and yet amount to no more, than what daily Experience, and the general Voice afford us; from which e'ry one says of You, what Horace said of Quintilius to Virgil.

Cui Pudor, & Justitiæ soror
Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas,
Quando ullum invenient Parem?

The Benefits the Nation has receiv'd from your Administration are too Numerous, too evident, and too important to suffer us to forget the Virtues, whence we derive them. 'Tis your Happiness, Sir, to have Oblig'd the bravest People, and the greatest King in the World; for such vast, and uncommon Services, deserve the Name of OBLIGATIONS.

You found the STATE engag'd in a most important, necessary, and expensive War, for the Honour, and for the Safety of Europe; in which the Liberties of our Neighb'ring Nations, as well as of our own, lay at Stake; and in which they

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they all had so absolute a Dependence on US, that without our Extraordinary Help the whole Cause must have faln. At such a Time as this, at so very nice and difficult a Con-juncture, Providence brought You from a private Life to do your Country, and all Europe, such stupendious Services, that Seven Tears ago, wou'd have been look'd on, as impossible to be done, and Chymera's to be promis'd.

Money (next to the admirable Conduct of the greatest Prince, and General of the Age) was the Support, the Life, the Nerve of the War. The Means of raising which, with all that Satisfaction and Ease to the People, as we have found it done, was a Talent peculiar to your self. But as by the Continuance of the War the Difficulty every Tear encreas'd, so it gave every Tear fresh Proofs of your Abilities, and how necessary your Administration was to make us Happy. But never was such a Tug of Judgment, never was such a Noble, daring and necessary Undertaking, as the Alteration of the whole Coin of the Nation, by the villany of so many, corrupted to the publick Misery, and to the Ruin of our Trade, of our Glory, nay, of our very Liberties, and all that cou'd, or ought to be, dear to Mankind, had it not been for Your admirable Adress and Management: This dreadful Evil, that had been so many Tears coming to a head, You, in a moment (as I may say) remov'd.

Who is there that does not know? Who is there, that does not sensibly enjoy the Benefit of your Counsels, in this great and happy Turn of Affairs? Who is there, that as long, as he possesses the Advantage of this Service, can forget the Virtue, the Judgment, and the unweary'd Industry, to which he chiefly owes it? In this you have oblig'd Posterity, as well as the Present Age, since both must derive their Wealth and Safety from Mr. Montague.

Such Singular, and such Important Services as these, Sir, have gain'd you the most noble Testimony of Your Merit, that Man can desire, and which we have seen none but You obtain. I mean that Publick Vote to your Honour, of the most August Assembly in the World, the HOUSE of COMMONS. The Vote of that HOUSE of COM-
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MONS, that has given so many evident and admirable Proofs of their Wisdom, Justice and Zeal for the publick Good; in the Useful and necessary Laws they have promoted, and the Punishments they have inflicted, like the Old Romans, or (what is not less Praise) like the Old English, without Regard to the Power or Wealth of the Offender. But their Glory had been imperfect, had we had no Example of their Justice in **REWARDS**, as well as **PUNISHMENTS**. Mr. **MONTAGUE** alone was that Noble Object of their Esteem, You alone cou'd furnish them with this Example which they wanted, and to You they ow'd the completing of their Character and Praise, in their memorable Vote of the 16th. of Feb. 1697.

Resolv'd, That 'tis the Opinion of this House, that the Honorable Charles Montague, Esq; Chancellor of the Exchequer, for his good Services to this Government, does deserve his Majesty's Favour.

I have put their own Words, because they are more Glorious, and Emphatic, than all the weak Flourishes of a false Rhetoric. This is no Flattery of a Mercenary Pen, but the Sentiments, the awful Judgment of a HOUSE of COMMONS, that have all along had the impartial GOOD and HONOR of their Country perpetually in their Eye; a HOUSE of COMMONS, which no Considerations have yet been able to Byas from the divine Medium of RIGHT, and from whom nothing but a try'd and substantial Virtue, cou'd bear off so noble and distinctive a Mark of Honour. And in this they are the True Representatives of the English Nation, which, nobly jealous of their Liberties, will be sooth'd by no gaudy Shew, no meer Appearance; Virtue alone must win their Love, as Yours has done. For this Vote is the Voice of the People, not excepting your very Enemies, who are yours only, as they are so to that Government, to the support of which your Wisdom, your Industry, and your Virtue do so much contribute.

You, Sir, have the Happiness at once to have the Love of the People, and the peculiar Favour of your King, which is a Sovereign Mark of undoubted Merit. And there can be no greater

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greater Proof of the Goodness, and the Wisdom of a Prince, than when a jealous People approve the Choice of his Ministers, for that must be an undeniable Confirmation of both their Capacity, and their Virtue. And this Confirmation is most evident in Mr. MONTAGUE, who is unanimously own'd at once the Darling of the Bravest People, and of the wisest King.

To whom, therefore, should neglected Learning fly for shelter but to You, Sir? From whom implore and hope an immediate Protection but from You? You have already given us many Instances of your Care and Encouragement of Wit and Learning, in the Favours you have bestow'd on several Men of Merit; from whence we draw an Expectation, that one day the English Nation will owe as much to You for her Honor and Glory in the Ornaments of Peace, as she has for the Support and Establishment of them in the War: And that France will have nothing to boast of their Richlieu (unless in precedence of time) but what we shall receive from our MONTAGUE, in an Accademy of Sciences equal, if not superior, to theirs.

But, Sir, when you unbend from the Thoughts of your important Employments, permit me to offer this Play amidst your more valuable Diversions. Your Judgment in Poetry, ought to make me dread your Censure; but your Candour and Generosity forbid my Fears, and make me hope you will, with some honorable Judges, that are pleas'd to approve it, excuse my Defects for the Usefulness and Boldness of the Attempt, from whence the Stage may get the Advantage of Encouraging some better Pens to go on with the Design. Yet this I may say for my Performance, that I am free from all that Immodesty, Immorality and Profaness, objected by a late Author, against our Modern Plays, and I'm confident, that he himself (that is so industrious at perverting the Meaning of the Poets, and giving their Words a most false and malicious Turn) will not be able to fix any shadow of an Accusation on this Play.

I have

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I have no Reason to Complain of the Success it had on the Stage, which was more than I had Assurance to hope, ev'n from the Helps of Euripides. But if it prove so fortunate as to please Mr. MONTAGUE, -it will compleat the Satisfaction of

SIR,

Your most Oblig'd,

most Devoted, and

most Humble Servant,

THE PREFACE.

TIS not that I'm fond of following the Mode of *Prefacing*, that I trouble the Reader with this; but, because I lie under, what I esteem one of the greatest *Duties* of Mankind, that of *Gratitude* to a dead *Hero*, and *living Friend*, to make my Publick Acknowledgments for the helps I have had from them both, in the following Poem.

That I owe a great many of its Beauties to the *Immortal EURIPIDES*, I look on as my *Glory*, not *Crime*; and I have so little to fear on that Account even from my *Enemies*, that I find their chief Objection is, that I have not follow'd him yet more close. But I hope, the Impartial Reader that can, and will with Candor compare this Play with the *Medea* of *EURIPIDES*, will own that I had Reasons sufficient to justify my deferring from him in some particulars. For my Intention being to compose a Piece (if I could,) to please our Audience; I was no farther to follow my *great Master* than both our Two *Hearers* agreed; but where their Sentiments differ'd, there I was oblig'd to forsake him, and comply with those who had my Profit, and what is much more in my Opinion, my *Reputation* in their Hands.

The little Observation I had made of our Audience, gave me reason to think, that a Play after the Model of the Ancients, would be far from displeasing them, for I found that what delighted and transported them, was contain'd in a very little compass of those long Plays, that were in Possession of the Theatre, which was the chief Characters only, and the violent Emotions of their Passions; that the multiplicity of great Characters (under the spacious name of *variety*) divided their concern, and by consequence, render it of less force; and that the several inconsiderable Persons were only born with, for the sake of the Chief, and most Passionate Parts. And this seems to me, to have been long ago observ'd by our admirable *SHAKESPEAR*, when he says,

*As when a well grac'd Actor leaves the Stage,
Our Eyes are IDLY bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be TEDIOUS, &c.*

Now whatever is tedious, can never please; and therefore I concluded, that the paring off those Superfluities that only swell'd the Bulk, without contributing to the end, could not render my undertaking less agreeable.

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Fixt in this Opinion, before it was my good Fortune to meet with the *Medea* of *EURIPIDES*, I drew the Plot of an *Opera* according to this my propos'd Model, from some hints of the *French Opera* of *Phaeton*; but after I had drawn the out-lines of the whole, and proceeded to the very turns, and bulinels, nay, almost Expression of the two first Acts; the *Medea* of *EURIPIDES*, accidentally fell into my Hands, and not only gave an extraordinary pleasure in the perusal, but made me resolve, since my Plot came so very near it, to make use of those Advantages the Imitation of so excellent an Author might afford me. But the Third-Act was finish'd before I could prevail with my self to quit my design'd Catastrophe of the Fall of *Phaeton* for that which now it has, which was one of the reasons of my preserving the Names of *Phaeton* and the rest;

But for fear this shou'd not satisfy our *Learn'd* Critics, (Custom will make me give them the generous Name *Critics*) that my al't'ring the Names of *Medea* and of *Jason*, is not so inexcusable as they seem to make it; I shall proposed to some, perhaps, of more force.

I saw a necessity on my first perusal of *EURIPIDES* of al't'ring the two chief Characters of the Play, in consideration of the different Temper and Sentiments of our several Audience. First I was Apprehensive, that *Medea*, as *Euripides* represents her, wou'd shock us. When we hear of her tearing her Brother to pieces, and the murdering her own Children, contrary to all the Dictates of *Humanity* and *Mother-hood*, we shou'd have been too impatient for her Punishment, to have expected the happy Event of her barbarous Revenge; nay, perhaps, not have allow'd the Character within the Compass of Nature; or at least decreed it more unfit for the Stage, than the Cruelties of *Nero*. Monsters in Nature not affording those just Lessons a Poet ought to teach his Hearers. But we shou'd with the extreamest Indignation have seen her (as Mr. *Dryden* observes) at last furnish'd with a Flying Chariot to escape her just Punishment. Nor wou'd our Audience, I fear, ever have consider'd the reasons that might justify *Euripides* in so uncommon a Character, viz, First, that *Medea* is the Instrument of the Gods to bring a wonderful Punishment of Perjury about, on those, whom *Power* had secured from all other means. Or Secondly, that he, by this Inhumanity of a Barbarian Woman, strove to deter the *Athenians* from Marriages with those, whom they generally esteem'd Barbarous, and by that means, enforc'd by the most prevailing Motive: Example, a known Law of *Athens* against any *Athenians* Marrying a Stranger. Or Thirdly, that *Medea* being the Grand-daughter of the *SUN*, had that Chariot as a Present from him. The Descendants of the Gods, (at least of so near a degree) being exempted, by the Pagan Theology, from the common Rules of Mankind, as if walking more at large, and being a superior, and more unconfin'd sort of Beings.

These considerations wou'd sufficiently justify *Euripides*; but I cou'd not hope the whole, or ev'n the greater part of my Hearers, shou'd allow 'em as a Defence for me; and my Opinion was so far justifi'd by some, that I read my Play to, that they thought, the very Revenge of *Abba*, tho' the Natural Result of leighted Love, lost her a great share of that pity I wou'd she might find. And this was the reason that I made use of those Advantages of the *Heathen System* of Divinity, which the Foundation of my Play allow'd me, as of *Juno*,

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Hymen, and her Father's Ghost, to fire her with that resentment her unhappy Love might else have smother'd; by this means to render her Revenge as involuntary an Act as possibly I cou'd; tho' it was all along my own Opinion, that the Natural Effect of those Passions every one finds in himself, wou'd have mov'd our pity, when her yielding to their most violent Impuls, had brought to deplorable a ruin on self, and her Children.

Revenge in Woman for sleighted Love, for being cast off for another, while yet she was, and thought her self Beautiful, after Possession, after Vows, and Oaths of Constancy, after the highest Benefits, is so natural a Frailty, that I'm confident no Woman of any Spirit wou'd bear it, without attempting some Revenge or other, and that, more or less violent, according to the Temper of the Woman. So that I cou'd not see how this, cou'd reasonably rob *Alibea* of pity; since no unfortunate Character ought to be introduc'd on the Stage, without its Humane Frailties to justify its Misfortunes: For *unfortunate* Perfection, is the Crime of Providence, and to offer at that, is an Impiety a Poet ought never to be guilty of; being directly opposite to his duty of *Rewarding the Innocent*, and *punishing the Guilty*; and by that means, to establish a just notion of Providence in its most important Action, the Government of Mankind.

This the great *Sophocles* has been notoriously guilty of in his *Oedipus Tyrannus*, where he punishes *Oedipus* for an *Accident*, as much as for the most Criminal Offences. For 'tis evident, that his *Mind* was ever so far from being guilty of *Parricide* and *Incest*, that he always expresses the utmost horror of them. And his voluntary Banishment from *Corinth*, prov'd, that he had done all, that Man could do to avoid the threaten'd Evil. I know very well, that some pretend, that he was punish'd for his *Curiosity* and *Rashness*, not *Parricide* and *Incest*, but I can find no tolerable reason for this their Assertion. For, *first*, it is not to be gather'd from the Play it self, nor from the Moral of it; and next the *Curiosity* he was guilty of in consulting the Oracle, was so far from being a Fault in the Heathen Religion, that it was one of its chief Duties; and then for a Man to defend himself against several insolent Assaunders, was rather an Act that merited a Reward, than Punishment, and *Laius*, not *Oedipus*, was here the Offender. The *Greeks* (as is evident from the Laws of *Athens*, &c.) were too great lovers of *Bravery*, to encourage any passive Notions, and too Zealous for their Religious Rites to suffer any *Adoral*, or *Lesson* of a Play to expose them as *foolish*. But the miseries of a King or Tyrant, however brought about, were agreeable in a *Democratick* Government. And I'm apt to believe, *Sophocles*, in this run along with the *Sin* of the Times, which entertain'd none of the most favourable Notions of Providence. And the Sons of *Orpheus* might well be guilty of complementing the depravity of Humane-kind with the Doctrine of *Necessity*, at the expence of Providence; since he himself had, by perverting Religion into Profane Mystery, and Evidence into Fables, scarce left the Deity one Attribute uncorrupted; and his Successors made the God-Head guilty of all those Crimes, which (according to them) were caus'd in his Family of Mankind by a *fatal Necessity*.

But to return from this Digression, (into which I insensibly am fallen) what I have said, proves, that it is necessary that the *unfortunate Characters* shou'd be guilty of some *Frailties* at least, to make Providence just in those Evils that fall upon them. And those *Frailties* that produce those Misfortunes being

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what we may all be subject to, must cause our pity for the suffering Object ; and this I think, wou'd demand it for *Althea*, if I had not in compliance with my Friends opinions, added those *Machines* to take off from her Guilt.

But if these nice Judges cou'd not pardon her punishing the Guilty, by her Revenge, how wou'd they have born her destroying the Innocent, and those her own Children ? For whom, Nature imprints in every Woman an uncommon tenderness. *Althea* ruins mad for the Death of her Children, *Medea* inhumanly Butchers hers ; which made *Seneca* give a very odd, and impious Conclusion to his Play on this Subject ; when he makes *Jason* (when she's aloft in her Chariot) flying away, say,

*Per alta vade spatia, sublimi aethere
Testare nullos esse qua veberis deos.*

This, I hope, is sufficient to justify my altering the Character of *Medea*. I shall now proceed to that of *JASON*, which, however justifiable in the *Original*, I had some reason to fear wou'd not be forgiven in my *Copy*. In the first Scene of my Fourth Act, on their meeting after his forsaking her *Jason*, wou'd seem too harsh, rough, and Ungentleman-like, to a Lady on our Stage ; for to this purpose is his first Speech to her ;

I was always of opinion, that un govern'd Anger was an impotent, and desperate Evil. Your own vain words (that hurt not me) have driven you to Exile ; whereas, cou'd you have quietly born the Commands of Power, you might here calmly have enjoy'd your House, and Home. Continue to call me as you do, the most profligate of Men, I matter it not ; but if you're Banish'd for what you went against the Royal House, you may take your Exile as a favour. I endeavour'd to appease them, to remit your Banishment, but by your proceeding still foolishly to rail against them, you do not suffer for me, but your own exorbitant Tongue. But words do not make me desert my Friends, and therefore, Woman, I am come to know how I can be serviceable to you, that you may not go with your Children destitute of Necessaries. For Exile brings inconveniences enough of its own along with it ; nor can I wish you evil, tho you hate me.

I must beg pardon that I have not put this Speech of *Euripides* into a better, and more Poetical dress, but that want of leisure will not permit ; beside, I quote not this as a Specimen of his Poetry, but a Proof of the Character of *Jason* ; which in my Opinion, wou'd have seem'd on our Stage too Magisterial, Proud, and Inhumane an Address to a Woman he had unjustly forsaken, to whom he shou'd (in our Climate at least) have render'd his leaving her more soft and easie, but he after her passionate Reply, makes a more cruel and barbarous Answer, which in Prose is to this effect.

Woman, I find, I ought to be no small proficient in Eloquence, but like an artful Pilot sheer by that empty Loquacity of your. Since therefore you so extoll your Benefits, I must tell you, that Venus alone preserv'd my Life, as she alone was the Convey of my Voyage ; nor do I think that I'm oblig'd to any other, either of Gods or Men. Your Gall, and the sharp fertility of your Wit, furnish you with Words ; but 'tis all but a meer arrogant boast of Speech, when you upbraid me with what Love compell'd you to do, that is, to deliver me from Dangers. I'll not attribute it to a worse Cause, but as you did assist me, I acknowledge it, and freely own the Favour. But I shall make it evident to you, that you've receiv'd greater Advantages from my Safety than my self. First, instead of your own native barbarous Country, you enjoy Greece, where Law and Equity flourish, and where Right gives not place to

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Favour, or to Force. *Your Parts and Learning are made known to the polite Grecians themselves, among them your Fame and Reputation is spread: Whereas if you had still been confin'd to those obscure remote parts of the Earth, you had liv'd and dy'd unknown, &c.*

In the same Speech he tells her, that *Nature had done better to have found out some other way of propagating Mankind, than by Woman, &c. That the Impotence of Women was arriv'd to that Degree, that an Injury to their Bed dissolv'd the strictest Friendship, and made them mortal Foes to them they Lov'd before.*

In need quote no more, to shew the Reader the Motive of my presuming to alter this Character too. For tho' *Euripides*, full of noble Thoughts of his Country, or to flatter his Country-men, makes it a Favour beyond any Retaliation, to be made an Inhabitant of Greece: Yet I fear'd that wou'd not be allow'd a Justification of such a manner of dealing here; therefore as *Phaeton* is young (the Age of Compassion) as well as Ambitions, I have given him a more generous sense of his Obligations. For tho' his *Heart*, and his *Love*, were not in his Power, yet it was always in his Power to endeavour to render his parting with a Woman that lov'd him, and to whom he had such uncommon Obligations, as easie as he possibly cou'd, and not to make this his Endeavours, seem'd too Barbarous to me, when there was no necessity of so cruel a Character. It must always be some Pain to a generous Temper not to be able to Love, where a Man is below'd, and impossible to use a Woman harshly for the violent Effects of that *Love*.

Being, as I thought, under an Obligation to make such Alterations in these two chief Characters, I confess I had not Assurance enough to keep the Names, my *great Master* had made use of, since that might be pardon'd in an *Imitation*, which wou'd not be forgiven in a *Translation*. I might indeed, had I thought it worth my while, have chosen other Names than what I have; but that Objection is so egregiously trifling, that I think it not worth an Answer.

The next Objection my *Hypercritics* make, is, —against *Phaeton's* being in *Love with Two at the same time*: But this, I am bold enough to say, proceeds from want of Reflecting (a Crime our Critics are often guilty of) as I shall, I hope, make evident in the sequel of this Preface. But let a Play succeed, or not, Faults must be found, or some Men wou'd lose a Character they seem very fond of; for they have a peculiar Aversion to the being distinguish'd by their discovery of the Beauties and Excellencies of a Poem; but desire rather to be known by their sifting, turning and winding the best Performances, to squeeze out at least the Shadow of a Fault, if they miss the Substance; grossly mistaking the true Business of a Critic, and forgetting the Justice of the best of Critics (because a Poet) *Horace*, who says of himself.

*Verum ubi plura nitent in Carmine, non ego paucis
Offendor Maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit Natura, &c.*

I am far from imagining, that this Play, notwithstanding its *Success*, is without its Faults; for 'tis impossible any Man should produce a Work of this Nature, where the Principles of the Art are not Demonstrations, but what will be lyable to critical Disputes: For this very Reason the generous part of Men shou'd excuse what they may dislike, for the pains the Poet has been at to please them.

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But besides these Gentlemen, who sower'd with their Learning, are too ungenerous, to have their little Endeavours of force enough to influence the Lovers of Poetry. I have another Sort of Readers to undeceive, who are much better Natur'd, and who may Condemn me through Ignorance, not Malice. Their want of Acquaintance with the *Ancients*, may give them a prejudice to my *uncommon Model*. To do my self Justice with these, I am oblig'd to lay down a very succinct Account of the Difference betwixt the *Ancients* and the *Moderns*, from which they will be the better able to pass a just Sentence on my Performance.

First, the *Ancients* to dismiss their Audience with that *Pleasure* and *Profit* they design'd them by their Plays, scarce ever extended their *Tragedies* to above half the Lengths of ours: For, by obliging the Mind to a too long Attention, they thought they shou'd make it grow dull, and tyr'd, which must of necessity render it less susceptible of those Ends they propos'd: Tho' the Diversion indeed was something lengthen'd by the singing of their *Chorus*, which answers the Musick I have brought in in Mine.

The *Moderns* on the contrary generally Spin out theirs to an unreasonable Extent, by adding *Under-plots*, and several *Persons*, no way necessary to their Design, which was admirably avoided by the *Ancients*, by introducing no more Characters than were indispensably necessary to ONE compleat Design. And in this I have endeavour'd, here to imitate them.

Next the *Ancients* differ'd from the *Moderns*, in the Choice of their *Subject*. We are for making the Scene of our Plays, the Field of Battle, a Siege, Camp, &c. Where, what ever we do else, we are sure to keep the Audience awake with our Drums and Trumpets, and make them Laugh with our Battles and Rencounters on the Stage, when they ought to be more concern'd: The *Ancients* never, as I can remember, chose such noisy Opportunities of perverting the End they propos'd in their Tragedies, viz. the moving Terror and Compassion, which can never be touch'd, where such tumultuary Objects come in view.

I urge not this, nor any other Argument here, to Reflect on those great Men of our Nation, who have follow'd this way; who finding it deliver'd down to them from an Ignorant Age of the Theatre, thought, without doubt, that no other way wou'd please, because this had been so long receiv'd. But I'm confident those who have so much excell'd others in this, wou'd have excell'd themselves in the more Natural Way of the *Ancients*.

Thirdly, the *Ancients* differ'd from our Poets in their *Incidents*. We seek after various, and surprizing Turns in the Fortune of the Persons introduc'd, which seldom or never happen in Common Life (the just Object of a Poet) and so very often lose all *PROBABILITY*, in what we falsely esteem *AD-MIRABLE*.

Thus, striving to draw, not the *Passions*, and *Natural Inclinations* of Man, by which we might inform the Reader and Hearer in himself, but the *Fortune*, which is something forraign and extrinsic, and the Faults of which lye seldom in our power to amend. Whereas the *Ancients* only (or chiefly at least) had regard to the Representation of Man in himself; and the Turns they made use of in their Tragedies (at least the most Beautiful of them) were of the

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the *Passions*, and not of the *Fortune* only, the Turns of which were ever so plac'd, as to give a better Light to the *Passions* they drew. In this too I have made it my Endeavours to imitate *Them*. In the first *ACT* I have aim'd at a Representation of the Turns, and Sturglings, of an expiring Love, and one that is just rising. On one side *Ambition* and *Novelty*; on the other *Obligations* and *Use*, contending with all their Force for the Mastery: The sure, and Experienc'd Love of the present Object, enforc'd with an uncommon Burst of *Tenderness*, prevailing, for that Instant, over the absent, and uncertain Beauty.

This may, in some measure, Answer the Objection I hinted at before, of *Phaeton's* being in Love with two at the same time; for a sensible and just Reader, or Hearer, would easily find that I had *Nature*, and certain *Experience*, not any *Dogmatical* Notions in my Eye, when I form'd that Scene. For a *Generous*, and an *Amorous* Man, when he passes from his *first Love*, to a new *Affair*, does not immediately loose all his former Tyes; but doubts a great while, which he loves best, his old Mistress, or his New; and may very well mistake the Effects of *Use* and *Gratitude*, for the Sentiments of *Love*, especially when these are increas'd and magnify'd, (as in my First *ACT*) by all the *Tenderness* of a constant *Passion*. *Justice*, *Gratitude*, and a thousand other Motives; range themselves on the side of the *Present Beauty*, and experienc'd Charms, and may well hold the *Mind* in suspense a while, which *Passion* is the most prevailing. And as our Best Resolutions, are often broke by a present Temptation, so I am very sure, that any young Man, in *Phaeton's* Circumstance, wou'd have the same Sentiments. And as his present Love for *Althea*, might be the Effect of other Causes, so might that *Passion* he thought he had for *Lybia*, owe its greatest share to *Ambition*; as, on a further Thought, he himself seems to imagine,

*Love and Ambition bear such equal sway,
And have such blended Pow'r o'er my Soul,
That 'tis with Difficulty they're distinguish'd.*

This I am certain every Man, that has his share of *Love* and *Ambition*, must experience in himself on the like occasion.

But I must not forget *Ovid*, the Great Master of *LOVE*— Who justifies this particular in a much higher degree, in his Verses to *Gracinus*; in those he is positive that he Loves two at once: Whereas I only suppose here, that the Sentiments of other passions might in a *Mind* unferri'd, be mistaken by *Phaeton* for those of Love; but to proceed.

In the second *Act*, the Motions, and Turns of Anger betwixt the two Friends, and the resolving it into a seasonable Reconcilement, carry on my Imitation of the manner of the *Ancients*; and I hope that *Phaeton's* Youth and Ambition, will make his Change in the Conclusion of the *Act*, sufficiently Natural.

In the third *Act* I'm more secure, for there, I have closely follow'd the Divine *Euripides*, in the grief, despair, rage, dissimulation, and resentment of *Althea*; as I have in her several Passions in the fourth *Act*, and something more at a distance in the fifth.

All just Critics have agreed in preferring *Euripides* to *Sophocles* himself, in his lively draught of the Passions. And therefore I cannot forgive *Scaliger's* ill Taste,

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Taste, in preferring *Seneca's* abominable *Medea* (I mean in comparison of that of *Euripides*) to his. *Seneca* has nothing but a stiff, unnatural Affectation of *Sententiousness*. *Euripides* is all free, easy, just, and natural; *Seneca* prepares nothing, *Euripides* has an admirable Preparation of every thing, and this brings me to the last difference I shall now take notice of betwixt the *Ancients* and *us*.

We are fond of *FINE THINGS*, (as the Ladies call 'em) which common-Place-Books will supply to any moderately industrious dull Fellow, on all occasions. Nay, *Seneca* has store enough of them to set up half a score Modern Authors, as admir'd as these Sentences are, tho' generally unnatural; for no Man or Woman agitated by violent Passions, can naturally speak, what they call *Fine things*, and to bring in Persons without any concern in the business of the Play, would be equally Faulty.

I had some thoughts when I begun this Preface to say something of the Style of the Play, and to have examin'd into what is the true *sublime*, and what is generally mistaken for it, many, both of the *Ancients* and *Moderns*, having affected a *rumid, puffy* Style for the *sublime*; but this I have industriously avoided. One is only *sound*, the other, as *Longinus* observes is in the *sense* as well as *words*. Wherefore that Poet that's fond of Gigantic words without a Soul proportion'd to their vast Bulk, falls under the Censure of *Horace*.

Professus grandia surget —

and — *duravit bnum, nubes & inania capet.*

Statius and *Virgil* are two Authors that may give us a just Idea of the true and false *Sublime*. *Statius* is fond of the *sound*, and chooses words that fill the Mouth, indeed, but when the confusion which that makes, is over, you seek in vain for the *sublimity* of *Thought*, but find nothing but a *sonorus emptiness*, numberless *Catachreses*, and monstrous *Hyperboles*. On the contrary, *Virgil* is great, and magnificent in Expression; but it is not *noise*, and always animated with a Noble, and *sublime sense*; he is easy (like true Majesty) as well as great; he fires your mind, but does not confound it; he may be read for ever, some parts of *Statius* scarce once.

But this Discourse is of too great an extent for me to pursue here, and my Preface is already swell'd to such a bulk, that I have scarce room to add a word of my Numbers, therefore, I shall only say, that I have often industriously affected a roughness in them, to avoid that *satire* I find in many of our best Modern Plays, which proceeds from a perpetual Indentury of Cadence.

What other Objections my *Cavillers* have made, I can easily loose the Sense of, in the satisfaction of the success of my Play, not only with the indifferent Spectators, but the best Judges of Poetry that I know in the Nation, as well as the most generously Candid, who, for the boldness of my imitation of the *Ancients*, forgave the faults I have committed in the performance. I'm sensible, and must own it to the World, that Mrs. *Knight's* admirable Action was no small advantage to me; who in playing *Althea*, has evidently shew'd her self one of the formost Actresses of the Age. And we may say of her in playing, as *Lassels* says of *Tasso* in *Potery*, *That he has bindred Virgil from being the only Poet*; so has the prov'd that the *English Stage* has more than one Actress. Nor indeed, do I complain of the Representation; Most of the Players doing me justice. But the *Music* was so admirable, that the best Judges tell me (for

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I dare not give it as my own bare Sentiment) that there is the true *Purcellian* Air through the whole : that tho' it be so very different in the several Acts, it is every where Excellent ; and that Mr. *Daniel Purcells* Composition in this Play is a certain Proof, that as long as he lives Mr. *Henry Purcel* will never die ; or our *English* harmony give place to any of our Neighbours.

As I begun my Preface with my Acknowledgement to the Divine *Euripides*, so I shall close it with owning my extraordinary Obligation to my Friend. The Character of Mr. *Cbeek* is too well known to the Witty, and Conversible Part of the Town to need any *Encomium* from me ; I am proud of being reckon'd among his Friends, and equally pleas'd with, and Vain of his particular Approbation of this Play, and the extraordinary Zeal he had shew'd for its success

'Twas under his Protection, and the security of his Name, that it ascended the Stage, and got a Reputation before it was acted ; and by that I am satisfied it met with a more favourable hearing on its first appearance. From his Judicious and friendly Correction, and Hints, it was secur'd from injuring his justly established Reputation of Wit and Poetry. The Obligation was uncommon, and Merits a greater Return than my Abilities are capable of Making. For a Man of Sense is, and ought always to be very Cautious of hazarding a Good, that is got with so much difficulty from so envious, and so ungenerous a People as generally have the disposal of a man's Fame in that particular. And indeed if I had not entirely confided in his Judgment, as much as Friendship, I should not have desired him to put his to the hazard for my own Advantage. It wou'd be needless to repeat the particular Hints he gave me, or the Corrections he made in several parts of the Play upon its perusal. But I must own that the *Castrophes*, owes most of its Beauty to his advice. For ry'd with writing the rest of the Play, I had hurry'd the Madnefs of *Althea*, with too much Precipitation, and without any apparent Cause. Which at first hearing he condemn'd and oblig'd me to write it over again, and alter it till it pleas'd him in the form you now find it.

Since the Conclusion of the foregoing Preface, I have met with a Book, call'd a short View of the Immorality, and Profaneness of the English Stage, &c. by *Jeremy Collier, A. M.*

NO Man wou'd be more glad to see all Indecencies driven from the *English* Stage, than my self ; but that desire ought not to influence me or any other Man to conjure up ten Thousand Devils of our own, and then lay 'em at the Expence of the Theatre. And yet this is the Conduct of this Younger *Histrion-Master*, I have no Room in this Place to shew all the Abuses, and Absurdities this Author is guilty of, but I reserve most of them for a work I have long design'd, and which I resolve to conclude some time this summer in Vindication of the Stage, &c. Now I shall only give you a tast of this furious Gentleman, by which you may Judge of the Man and his *Honesty* as well as *Understanding*.

The principal Heads of this Book are included in the *Immodesty*, *Profaneness*, and *Immorality* of the Stage, and the *Clergy's* being there abus'd. A word

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to each. The first Point I can say little to, since he is not pleased to be any farther particular, than to make References to several Plays, which I have not by me at this Time; but I suppose they are Goblins of his own forming, as many of those are, which he has produc'd under the other heads. Under *Profaness* he Places the *Swearing on the Stage*; but to prove this he Quotes no Oaths, but an Interjection, that has very little Affinity to an *Oath*, unless it be because it has two letters of one of the Words, which do in reality compose One.

I grant this Gentleman is no *Friend to Oaths*, yet his *Zeal* should not transport him out of his Princely Wits, or make him run into such a Whimfie in *Etymology* as a certain fellow did in *Pedigre*, to derive himself from King *Pepin*. *Dipper, diaper; Napkin, Nepkin; Pipkin, King Pepin*, as foolishly Extravagant as this seems, Mr. Collier is more so through great part of his Charge against our *Stage*, which to impartial Judges must seem very Innocent, when its professed Enemy is driven to the wretched Necessity of fixing forged Crimes upon it. If he replies, that the harmeless Interjection *Gad* is at least a *vain Word*, and therefore to be abandoned, I answer, that if the Poets must suffer for a few *Vain Words*, Mr. Collier has a much larger Account to make up, for a great part of his book will fall under that Condemnation. Another Branch of his *Profaneness*, is Abuse of *Scripture*. Nay he is full of Indignation to hear *Jeremy*, in *Love for Love*, Call the *Natural Inclinations to Eating and Drinking*, Whoreson Appetites. This is *Strange Language*, pursues he, the *Manichæans*, who made the Creation the work of the Devil, cou'd scarcely have been thus Course. *Risum teneatis?* They are our Authors own words I assure you, if this be not turning all the Theological Controversies into Redicule with a Vengeance I'm much mistaken.

What this Gentleman understands by *Whoreson* I know not, but if our *Natural Inclinations* are not to be spoke against at all, I'm sure few Preachers are Innocent, the fathers of the Church very guilty, and Mr. Collier at last as criminal in this particular as Mr. Congreve, for he himself calls our *Natural Inclinations to Generation brutal*, and which are fully as Natural as that to *Eating and Drinking*; to say nothing of Divine Injunction in *Genesis*. Now I can't help thinking that *brutal*, is to the full as infamous, and impious an Epithete for our *Inclinations*, as *Whoreson*. Again he will have Mr. Congreve guilty of no less than Blasphemy, for making *Valentine* in *Love for Love* say that he is *Truth*, because there is an Expression something like it in the *holy Scriptures*. At this way of arguing he may deny us the Use of the Whole *Alphabet*, because the Words of the *Bible* are compos'd out of it; or evidently cut out three parts of all the *Languages*, the *Bible* is translated into.

Here he is angry at Mr. Congreve for hitting by chance on two words which stood together in the *New Testament*? anon he is more Angry with Mr. Vanbrook, for altering the words of the Text in the *Provok'd Wife*. I find a man must be an admirable Pilot to Steer betwixt this *Scylla* and *Charybdis*. If he had been that *Good Christian*, or that *Honest Man* he wou'd be thought, he shou'd have shewn more Candor and Charity, than to put the worst, and most Scandalous Construction on any Gentleman of Honour and Probity's Meaning; for I dare, in Mr. Congreves Name, assert that the impious design which

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which this Author has coin'd out of his own head, was far from his thoughts and where there is any way to think well of a Man, that way ought certainly to be taken, both by a Christian, and an honest Man. I have not Room here to bring the most evident demonstrations of Mr. *Colliers* foul dealing, but I do not doubt in my Answer to his Book to prove, that he is guilty of greater *Immorality*, *Profaneness* and *Blasphemy*, than, from his Quotations, all or at least the greater part of the Authors, he has arraign'd, can be convicted of. If the publick Defamation of several Men of Reputation be Immorality, he is guilty of it. If to make *half Quotations*, put false, and forc'd as well as guilty Constructions on innocent Words, be dishonest, and Immoral, he is notoriously so. If (as shall be made evident) great part of the Blasphemy he has Charg'd on the Stage, be but the Child of his own Malicious Invention, it must unavoidably follow that a great share of the Blasphemy in his Book is his own, and not the Poets.

I have neither Room nor Leisure now to examine his Charge on the Stage, for abusing the Clergy of the Church of England, so eminent for piety and Learning: if there be any such practice, I think it ought to be reformed. Yet he of all Men living, is the most unfitting Man to appear their Champion, who has made it his endeavours to make much the greater part of that *Venerable Body* pass for a company of *perjured*, and *Mercenary Times-servers*. But of this more hereafter.

To insinuate himself with the Ladies, he has taken, in my Opinion, a very awkerd Method, for with all the Persons of the highest Quality, Virtue, and Learning of the Other Sex, he has fix'd an Infamy (I mean to his little Power) on all the Ladies of Honour, Piety, and Sense, who remarkably encourag'd those very Plays he would render so monstrous. He must argue them guilty of want of *Honesty* or *Understanding*, for tho' they are not by Blushes, or any publick Indication in the Theatre to shew their dislike of these things, yet by their absence they ought to discourage Blasphemy, and such Obscenity, that our Modest Author dare not transcribe. But from the Encouragement of these Plays, 'tis evident that Mr. *Collier* has a Notion of Words, and Things peculiar to himself, and shou'd therefore, to make himself understood, have given us the definitions of his Terms in the front of his book. Which I desire he may do before I publish mine in Vindication of the Stage against Mr. *Pryn*, and Mr. *Collier*; in which I question not, but I shall make evident that the Wit of Man can invent no way so efficacious, as Drammatick Poetry, to advance *Virtue* and *Wisdom*, and the Supream duty of an *English man*, (next the Love of God which is always Supream) the Love of our Country, a Lesson I shall particularly Recommend the Stage for to Mr. *Collier*.

THE PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. Powel, Mrs. Cross, &c.

COULD we but hope Athenian Judges here,
We shou'd have then but little Cause to fear.
Euripides to Night adorns our Stage,
For Tragic Passions fam'd in every Age.
In every Age ador'd by men of Sence,
Comes here on you, to prove his Influence.
First in his Glory now Two Thousand Years,
No puny Critick's weak Attacks he fears,
O! that he could be try'd here by his Peers.
Him the Wise Socrates alone wou'd see,
(Socrates the Wisest by the Gods Decree.)
His Faults our Author hopes that you will please
To pardon for the Beauties of Euripides.
If you damn this (as who knows but you may,
Considering What strange things y' encourage ev'ry day)
This our New Poet boldly bid me say—
Since you with Trash more willingly are fed,
He'l toil no more to give you wholesome Bread.
But quit the Antients, and avoid th' Expence
Of Nature, Probability, and Sense:
And furnish out with Speed another Play,
Of Empty Bombast in your Modern Way.
Forc'd Passions, undistinguish'd Manners Use,
Surprizing Impossibilities he'l Chuse,
With all th' unnatural Charms of your own darling Muse.

Mrs. Cross and six of the Youngest Actresses come forward.

Mrs. Cross. Lord, Mr. Powel! What d'you talk of those
Hard Words, to Courtiers, Soldiers, Cits, and Beaux?

Pray

*Fray let us speak—We shall be understood,
We speak the Language of All Flesh and Blood.*

Mr. Powel. Oh! Mrs. Crofs pray do as you think good. } Exit.

*Mrs. Crofs. On our Advice our Poet thinks not fit
To trust his Fortune wholly to your Wit,
For that's the Rock, on which he fears to Split.
As much a surer way his Hopes to Advance,
He wisely borrows Ornaments from France.
Here's what you Use to take so much Delight in,
Musick, and Dance, and every thing but Fighting.
And tho' he knew that always here wou'd please,
He left it out to Complement the Peace.
But yet for fear this shou'd not make you easie,
He sent all us here, in hopes to please ye.
For when a wanting Friend has often fail'd,
With the rich Churl our Sex has soon prevail'd;
Molded th' ingenuous Cully to their Mind,
And made him prove most Prodigally kind,
If then this Charming Tribe shou'd fail to win ye,
I needs must say some strange dull Devil's in ye.
Cannot our Eyes, our Youth, our Form appease ye?
And have we Nothing?— Nothing that can please ye?
Has Malice such Confounded Pow'r o're ye,
That you will damn, tho' Youth, and Charms implore ye?
—Well if your darling Envy damn this Play.
(At least before we've had a full third day)
All your Efforts I hear I will despise.*

The first. And I. 2d. And I. 3d. And I. 4th. And I. 5th. And I.

Miss Chock. Not one of us—I'm sure I'll ne're comply.

*Mrs. Crofs. You hear what Doom is past, therefore beware,
And for our Sakes the unknown Poets Spare,
All you that have Loves Fear before your Sights,
For Women may be honest out of Spight.*

Drama—

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

- Mr. Mills: *Merops*, King of *Egypt*, and the *Indies*, Father to *Lybia*, and Husband to *Clymene*.
Mr. Powel: *Phaeton*, Son of the *SUN*, by *Clymene*, in Love with *Lybia*, and Marry'd to *Alibea*.
Mr. Williams: *Epaphus*, the Son of *Jupiter*, by *IO*, now the Goddess *Isis*, Friend to *Phaeton*.

W O M E N.

- Mrs. Powel: *Clymene*, second Wife to *Merops*, and Mother to *Phaeton*.
Mrs. Knight: *Alibea*, Neice to *Argus*, and Daughter to the King of *Samos*, Wife to *Phaeton*.
Mrs. Temple: *Cassiope*,
Mrs. Kent: *Merope*, } Maids to *Alibea*.
Lybia, Daughter to *Merops* by a former Wife, and Heiress to *Egypt*, and the *Indies*, in Love with *Phaeton* a mute Person.

Priests, Shepherds, Messengers, &c.

SCENE a Grove, and adjoining Temple in the Court
Egypt.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Curtain rises, and discovers a pleasant Grove, &c. the Prospect ending in a River running thro a Valley. Phaeton, Althea, and her Maids in the front of the Stage, and on each side Shepherds and Shepherdesses in Green.

Phaeton and Althea come forward before the rest.

Alth. 'T Was on this day, that first I saw my Phaeton,
'T was on this day, that first I lov'd my Phaeton:
For when I first beheld you, I first lov'd you.

Phaet. I lov'd *Althea* too, when first I saw her ;
Lov'd did I say ? no, I ador'd her rather :
For as the Gods to Man, so she to me
Reveal'd herself in generous Benefits
Of Life, of Liberty !

Alth. O ! my dear Lord !
Permit me here in safety to review
The wondrous Rise of my unchanging Love :
Or I lose half the Triumphs of this day.

Phaet. Oh ! lose no joy that *Phaeton* can give.

Alth. It was the solemn Festival of *Juno*,
The great Protectress of our *Samian* State,
When at the sacred Rites this wondrous Sight
Surpriz'd us all, but most affected me.
The Priest o'th' sudden started from the Victim,
And threw aloft his trembling hands to Heav'n :
His hair erected, stood upright like bristles ;
His glaring eyes about confus'dly roll'd,
And his stretch'd nostrils breath'd a cloud of smok :
When from his widen'd mouth an awful voice,
A Voice much more than mortal shook the Temple ;
As thunder dreadful, and almost as loud,
And in a storm pronounc'd these fatal words ;
Samos is lost, and Hierax is no more,
Unless we drive these Strangers from our shore.
He said, and full of sacred Fury led
The willing people to the neighboring Sea.

Phaet. 'T was there he found us, just escap'd the Wreck ;
The shatter'd Reliques of th' inclement Tempest ;
Our Swords, and Virtue, all the Waves had left us.
With joy we spy'd the Ensigns of the Gods,
Secure of help, and hospitable rights,
Both from his age and office. But alas !
Our hopes all vanish'd ere they well were form'd ;
For on the verge of the descending Strand,
With hostile threatnings he forbade our passage.
Th' ignoble Vulgar, with confirming shouts,
All seconded their Leader.
What could we do ? on ery hand beset :

The Sea on this side, and on that the People,
 All sworn to our Ruin? Resolv'd on Death,
 My small, but chosen Band, unsheath'd their Swords,
 Appealing to the Gods, we rush'd upon 'em,
 And drove th' inhumane herd into their street.

Alth. Ay, there I first beheld my Godlike Lord,
 Like *Mars* undaunted, but like *Cupid* Fair;
 A charming terror fill'd his lovely face,
 That did more execution than his Arm;
 Tho' that did Wonders scarce to be believ'd.
 As from the Palace we survey'd the Fight
 (For the first Tumult drove us from the Temple)
 We all took Int'rest in your doubtful Fate;
 And those that fear'd you, pray'd you might o'come;
 At least that swift Agreement might secure you.

Phae. The people now amaz'd at what we did,
 Had soon agreed, had not *Sesostri's* Sword
 Gleft down their Mitred Chief. For tho' he fell
 Himself to expiate his Crime, their rage
 Encreas'd still with their numbers; till unable
 To wield our glutt'd Swords, we all were taken.

Alth. Then, like the Sun obscur'd in noisome Fogs,
 I lost my *Phaeton* in th' earthy Vulgar.—
 A pow'rful Pity for thy youth and beauty
 (I thought it Pity but I found it Love)
 Compell'd my steps down to thy frightful Dungeon,
 To set thee free from Chains, and hast'ning Death.
 But oh! the Joy! the Transports of my Soul,
 When you refus'd your liberty and life,
 If those must rob you of your Benefactress:
 Refus'd a flight, that bore you from *Althea*!
 O! the soft melody that thro' my ears
 Dissolv'd my heart at your dear vows and oaths.
 Of boundless love, and of eternal truth!

Phae. O! my false heart! thou hast too soon forgot 'em! *Aside.*

Alth. By the bright God, the Author of thy Being,
 I cou'd not help the Fondness I betray'd.
 The struggling Ecstasy too mighty grew
 For my weak breast to hold! it bore down all
 The artful coyness of our modest Sex:
 The Ties of Blood; the Fears of Womanhood;
 Father, Mother, Country, and toilsom Dangers.
 Lest with joy from all that men hold dear,
 Alone o're Seas to *Asia* in a Boat,
 My Pilot thou, and my protecting God.

Phae. (*Aside.*) Oh! why was glory, and this charming woman
 Such mortal foes, as not to be united?
 Why must I owe so much, and be so poor,
 That I can pay so little? O *Lybia*!
 Thy tyrant Beauties have usurp'd my heart,
 And ravish'd me from all my vows and oaths.

Alth. My Lord, you're thoughtful; nay you seem disturb'd,
 As oft you do of late: does ought aggrieve you?

Phae. Nothing, *Althea*, but the mournful Thought,
 How much ill-fated love, alas! has cost thee,

The Fatal Divorce.

3

Alth. Tho Father, Mother, Country, all be lost,
Tho for my Unkles truth to *Juno's* trust,
For the Fidelity of *Argus*—

Egypt protesting Goddess hates ev'n me :
Yet in her *Egypt*, I have nothing lost,
While *Phaeton* is mine, and only mine.

Phae. Gods! why d ye throw such Tenderness away,
On one so little meriting her Goodness! *aside.*

Alth. Come, come, this day banish all anxious thoughts;
We'll drown in Music, and the sports prepar'd
To celebrate this Feast, all sad reflections.
Come sit with me, and please my wishing eyes,
While these delight our ears.

They seat themselves, and the Music comes forward, &c.

First Shepherd. *Come, come, all ye Shepherds, come, come all away,
Forget all your Cares,*

*Your Fears, and Despairs,
For 'tis the Lovers Holiday.* [Repeat this in a Chorus.

Second Shepherd. *Let every Shepherd bring his Lark,*

In mirthful sports the hours we'll pass;

And while we sing, to raise our pleasures,

Tread you the earth with grateful measures.

[Here repeat the

Chorus, while the Shepherds and Shepherdesses dance.

Third Shepherd. *Ye smiling Graces, come inspire*

In every Breast a tender fire,

While wanton laughter adds to our desire.

Chorus and Dance again.

Boy and Girl come forward.

Boy. *Life is but a little span,*

Let us pass it all in pleasure;

I do not lose this dawn of Man,

Since my day's so short a measure.

Girl. *Why so hasty? forward Boy:*

Sure 'tis not so long you've fasted?

Ere I'm ripe, to crop the joy,

Is to eat me ere I'm tasted.

Boy. *Why this coyness? why this courting*

To the joys you long to prove?

Nature made you all for sporting,

Nature made you all for love.

She. *O fie! O fie! He. You must comply. She. I must deny.*

He. *You will comply. She. No, no, not I. He. Good faith I'll try.*

She. *No, no, not I. He. Indeed you lie.*

First Shepherd and first Shepherdess.

He. *Come, gentle Phyllis, we'll softly retire,*

And once more attempt to allay the dear fire,

My Wishes, thy Eyes and thy Arms inspire.

She. *No more—for I fear we ne'er shall attain*

The end of our wishes, but burn still in vain.

He. *As oft as we burn, we'll repeat the soft joy.*

She. *To repeat it too often the bliss will destroy.*

He. *When the fire's abated, and the passion is done,*

We shall both be as easy as e're it begun. (The two last lines repeat to-

gether, and then repeat em in a Chorus.

The Fatal Divorce.

Second Shepherd pursuing a Shepherdess that flies him.

*Cruel Daphne do not fly me,
Hear me tho you still deny me.
Hear each piteous groan and sigh,
See, oh! see! our Strephon dye.*

[Third Shepherd coming to him
and pulling him back by the sleeve:

*Fond Shepherd prithee cease to wooe her,
She flies the more, that you pursue her.
All your whining, and your pining
Will but make her proud, and vain.
Do but slight her, that will spight her,
And revenge on her your pain.*

*There's Lydia, there's Chloris, and Phyllis to please you;
They're fairer than Daphne, yet humble and easie,
Whomso sighing, and groans you pervert the brisk joy,
You sin against youth, and offend the soft Boy,
For the pleasures he offers, you fondly destroy.*

The last three lines repeated in a Chorus.

Fourth Shepherd. To passive years resign your pining,

*Active youth no time can spare:
To unperforming Age leave whining,
Youth can better please the fair.
That sweetly should gain,
By the languishing pain,
And sigh more with joy, than despair.*

While the last Chorus is here repeated he seems to leave her,
and she looks back kindly on him, and then sings,

*Can you, can you, will you leave me?
Mind em not, for they deceive you.*

*Quick possessing,
Palls the blessing,*

While resistance makes it lasting.

Easie love destroys desire,

Sighs, and wishes fan your fire.

You lose your Appetite by tasting,

Which you sharpen still by fasting:

'Tis resistance makes it lasting.

The three last lines repeated in a Chorus of Shepherdesses.

He. Enough of delays, my passion to raise,

And now to Feast let's repair;

Nè're fear I shall prove a glutton in love,

My stomach's so keen by despair.

Chorus.

Resistance and yielding well temper'd, still prove

The best Sauce to the surfeiting Banquet of love.

They all go off Singing. Phaeton and Althea come forward.

Phae. (aside.) O Lydia! still thou sit'st too near my heart!

For Sports and Music to remove thee thence.

Music blows up the flame I shou'd extinguish.

Alth. My Lord, why still thus sad amidst this Mirth?

You dash the pleasures, that you shou'd advance,

And with forbidding frowns, you check my rising Joy,

What secret sorrow thus o're-clouds your face?

On such a day as this too? Speak my Lord——

The Fatal Divorce.

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'Twill ease your mind to let me share its burden.

Phae. Nothing— But that I'm weary of this sloath;
These weak enervate softnesses; this rest.
My active soul disdains this womans life.
I wou'd in youth hoard up for feeble age,
An awful Treasure of immortal Glory.

Alth. Mistaken men invert the use of nature;
Age is most fit for Mischief, Youth for Love.
When years come on and Impotence of pleasure,
Provok'd by envy of the joys they want,
We may allow them to disturb the world.

Phae. You speak, but like a woman, as I live.
How shoud I here exert the God within me?
In thrilling notes? in languishments? and kisses?

Alth. How wou'd my Lord, my Love, exert the God,
But living like the Gods in peaceful joys?
Come, you're unkind to let an empty name,
Rival a love so generous as mine.

Phae. I struggle to thee, spight of my ambition;
But yet my soul starts back to ambition;
For 'tis ambition is my nat'ral bent:
And tho I give you all of me I can,
You are unsatisfy'd you have no more.

(Turns away and walks from her)

Alth. Turn not away—I'm pleas'd with what you'll give:
Let me but have you all while you are here.
For toilsome thoughts, you will have too much time
Give me unrivall'd this auspicious day.
Be soft, be tender now, look kindly on me;
For my soul languishes, and I am sick with love.

(Looking wistfully on him.)

Phae. (Aside.) I dare not let my guilty eyes meet hers,
She views me with such pointed searching looks,
As if she'd spy into my very heart,
And there discover all the fatal secret.

Alth. You shun my Eyes as if they were disgustful:
What have I done? or how have I offended
My Lord! my Life?

Phae. Offended! thou offended?

Alth. I swear I love with my first Virgin fondness:
I live all in you, and I dye without you.
At your approach my heart beats fast within me,
A pleasing trembling thrills thro all my blood.
When e're you touch me with your melting hand:
But when you kiss! O 'tis not to be spoke!

Phae. No, no, you have not— nay, you can't offend me:
You're innocent—

Alth. In A&T, in Word, in Thought;
I call the Gods to attest my innocence.
If e're I wish'd, or hop'd; or thought of joy
But what you gave, but what was all in you,
May you be angry, may you be unkind;
Or in one curse to sum up all that's hateful,
May you soon love some other!

Phae. Gods! Gods! can I hear this and yet be false. *Aside:*

Alth.

Alth. So may the Lord of my desires be true,
As they all move, and center all in you.

Phae. Alas! *Althea* I can't doubt thy truth,
And know thy love. But yet——

Alth. But yet? but what?

[He walks up and down discomposedly and thoughtfully.]

Unfold that fatal Yet——O tell me that!

Phae. (Aside.) Gods! why am I by double love made wretched?

Too much abundance 'tis that makes me poor.

Oh! had I ne'er seen One, or seen but One,

I had been happy then: but seeing both,

I burn for both, and with an equal fire,

I love them both, and both I most desire!

Alth. Oh why thus thoughtful? why that look cast down?

Those folded Arms! Oh why those sudden starts?

Some fatal Sorrow you conceal from me

That shakes your soul thus. Give, O! give my part.

O! do not rob me of my share of woe.

Not on these terms I gave my plighted faith,

To taste your joys, and not partake your grief.

Indeed, I cannot hear such cruel kindness,

Such partial woe, where I must have no share!

(Weeps.)

Phae. (Aside.) O wav'ring heart! do I deserve such love?

Treacherous, false, perfidious, as I am?

Yet she is excellent, divinely excellent! *(Looks earnestly at her.)*

Young as the Spring, and as the Graces fair;

Constant as Truth, as melting Pity tender;

As Want ingenious, and as Goodness kind!

Alth. Speak, my dear Lord, these looks are kind indeed:

Come let your Tongue convey my bitter potion,

Which yet, to share with you, will be most sweet.

Phae. (Aside.) *Lybia* is fair——yet not so fair as her——

She must be proud too of the Crowns she brings,

If she wou'd bring 'em me: for tho' I lov'd her,

Yet she perhaps wou'd never have lov'd me!

Or not so well, so fiercely, as *Althea*!

Alth. Quite lost in Thought, he hears not what I say!

Phae. (Aside.) Love and Ambition bear such equal sway,

And have such blended power o'er my soul,

That 'tis with difficulty they're distinguish'd.——

It must be so, Ambition pleads for *Lybia*,

But for *Althea* Love.——And Love prevails,

She must, she shall, she does possess me all,

Be gone Ambition, with thy noisy charms,

Thy tinsel glare——Haste, take me to thy arms,

O fold me here most charming of thy kind!

Here, form me, mold me, shape me to thy mind,

Glory, Ambition, all you've driven away,

You ne'er possess'd me all till this triumphant day!

Alth. O racking joy! O most transporting Rapture!

O gift beyond return! what shall I say?

What shall I do to shew how I am ravish'd?

What can I give, I've given you all before,

I've given my self, and I can give no more.

But take that gift, I'll give it o'er and o'er.

Flies into his Arms and embraces him.

Phae.

*Aloud &
turning
to her.*

*Runs into
her arms.*

The Fatal Divorce.

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Phae. O ! gift like Heav'n, the same, yet always new !
Full of young pleasures, and unfading joys !
Unwasting fuel of Loves growing Fires !
Exhaustless source of ravishing desires !
I will forego the chace of false renown,
And my pursuit shall be thy Charms alone ;
Of all things else unknowing and unknown.
Happy in thee I will sublimely move
Within the perfect circle of my love.
There blooming pleasures, will be always found.
And ever springing Raptures fill the glorious Round.

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}

ACT II. SCENE I.

The same Scene of the Grove continues. Enter Epaphus and Clymene.

Clym. Within this Grove, or th' adjacent Valley
You'll find your friend, my hapless *Phaeton*.
I have us'd all persuasions of a Mother
To make him quit this cunning *Samian* Songstrefs ;
But all in vain. — I hope from friendship more,
And what I cou'd not, you, perhaps, may gain.

Epa. *Clymene* be sure I'll do my utmost.

Epaphus is not us'd to be deny'd
When in so just a cause he makes demand.

Clym. I will be near to come to your Assistance,
Friendship, and filial duty join'd can't fail.

Epa. You need not stay, but leave it all to me.
I'll free you from this *Samian*.

Clym. Be not too rough.
He will not brook Command, tho to entreaty
Plyant.

Epa. Madam retire, I hear some coming —
Leave this Affair entirely to my conduct.

Clym. I go — but not far off, for fear he fail,
There mark the strengths where friendship can't prevail,
Then against those my batt'ring Engines move,
Of Power, Ambition, and a Virgins Love. (Exit)

*As she
goes out.*

Epa. Gods ! the proud Boy presumes too much, yet sure
He builds upon my former friendship for him :
He durst not else have brought this hated *Greek*,
This Neice of hostile *Argus* into *Egypt*,
Nay ev'n into the sacred Roofs of *Iris*,
My great but injur'd mother. But he comes.

Enter Phaeton.

And at his sight my blood with fury boils,
And combates fiercely with expiring friendship.

Phae. What do I see ? My friend, my *Epaphus* :

Come.

Come to my Arms, and let me press thee close.

Offers to embrace him but Epaphus puts him away with his hand.

Epa. Forbear — for tho' tis certain you see *Epaphus*,
Yet whether he ought to be your friend, y had
Best consider. — if not, I press no Foe
To this true bosom.

Phae. What can this strangeness mean?
I am not conscious to my self of ought,
That does deserve this cold, this unkind meeting.
After thy long thy most regretted Absence.

Epa. Perhaps you hoped I never shou'd return

Phae. O ! barbarous thought for one so well belov'd,
It was my Mornings Pray'r, my daily Vow.
That thou might'st soon be here.

Epa. You thought me tame then,
Mean, Cowardly, base enough to bear it ?

Pha. Bear it ! bear what ?

Epa. Come, come, you know you've wrong'd me,
And this affected ignorance is unmanly.

Phae. Come, come, you know I cannot wrong you.

Epa. How ! cannot wrong me ?

Phae. The brave can do no wrong.
I cannot wrong my Fee, much less my Friend.

Epa. What er the brave can do, I say you've wrong'd me,
Traacherously, falsely wrong'd me.

Phae. Wrong ! Falshood ! —
False to my Friend ! as soon

I wou'd forego my Love my Mistress -- nay --

Epa. Mistress ! what Mistress ? for when I left thee,
Thou stoodst an active Candidate for Glory :
Fame was thy Mistress then, and War thy Courtship ;
Thy Sword the moving eloquence that won her.
If thou art alter'd, if thou'rt fawn from her,
If thou art sunk to puling Womans Love,
Thou'rt false — too chang'd to be a friend of mine.

Phae. That I do love a Woman is most true :
But such a Woman ; so unlike her Sex :
Full of such noble Virtues —

Epa. Full of Follies,
Full of Vice, most worthless of her Sex —

Phae. Hold friend, no more, I charge thee say no more,
For shou'd I bear to hear her wrong'd by thee,
Thou well mightest think, I'd wrong an absent Friend.

Epa. Name not that sacred word ? a Friend is what
Thou dost not understand : for Friend to Friend
Is holy sacred, prefer'd to all but Heaven
While thou deserv'st thy friend for a vile Woman,

A Toy, a Butterflye : the worst of Women too —

Phae. No more — it is a mighty proof of Friendship,
That I can bear all this, tho' ev'n from thee. —
I do prefer my friend to all but Honour,
And Honour binds me to this worthless Woman.

Epa. Honour ! what Honour canst thou challenge now
That you forsook when you affronted me,
Affronted me in much my dearest part

The Fatal Divorce.

My Mother, *Isis*, the Goddess of thy Country;
Egypt's protectress, the belov'd of *Jove*.
What honor binds you to a Vagabond,
When your friends honor, and your Mothers tears,
The safety of your native soil, and Gods
Forbid her presence, this hateful Niece, this
Limb of cursed *Argus*?

Pha. I owe my life
To her.

Epa. I'd sooner owe it to a Coward,
He has the face of Man.— but to this Woman!—

Phae. I drew her from her Father, and her Country.

Epa. That was your Crime, now send her back then.

Pha. 'Twou'd be
Unjust to leave her now.

Ep. 'Tis impudence
To keep her here. Come, come, young man, you must
Forego this *Samian*.

Pha. Must?

Ep. You shall.

Pha. Shall?

Ep. Shall! yes shall; I come to force her from thee.

Pha. Force her from me! ha! ha! I laugh at thee;
Thou know'st, proud Man, thou canst not force her from me.

Epa. Proud obstinate Boy, I will.

Pha. Ha! — By the
Bright God, m' illustrious Father—

Epa. Name him not,
He must disown thee, a Womans Property,
A fond convenient tool for useful ends.
Do Gods get such as thee? no 'tis a Boast,
An empty groundless Boast.

Some Trader got thee, and some Strumpet bore thee,
And shuff'd thee into the Royal Cradle.

Pha. If I bear this, may Girls, and Eunuchs hoot me;
Cowards buffet me; Infamy drive me
From all Resorts, where manhood's to be shown. *Draws.*
Draw, draw, thou noisie Talker; try whose Arm
Will best assert its Heav'nly Author. *Epaphus draws too.*

Ep. Come on. *(Clymene runs in betwixt them.)*

Cly. O! hold! O! stay your furious Swords, and Arms!
Or else thro me you cut your guilty passage.

Pha. Ha! my Mother! — Was this your cunning, Sir?
To place your Safeguard, e're you durst provoke me?
But I shall find a Time she shan't protect thee;
Thou Wordy Hero; thou Tongue—thou WomanFighter.
Thy guilty Mother lurk'd within a Cow
So long, she fixt the dastard Spirit in thee
Of that tame Brute.

Ep. Madam, I pray withdraw,
Or I before you shall chastise that Boy,
By your approach made bold.

Cly. O! *Epaphus!*

Was this well done? was this done like a Friend?
To heap more Sorrows on me by this Quarrel?

Wast thus that I shou'd leave it to your Conduct?
 Was this your Word to *Merops*, and to me?
 Did we entrust to you our Common Darling,
 To brave, insult, and quarrel with him?
 Under the Friend have you conceal'd the Foe?
 And made me lead you to destroy my Son?
 It is unjust, inhospitable, base,
 Unworthy the bright Goddess, whence you sprung!
 To her I must appeal against her Son.

Ep. I have been to blame, I ask your Pardon.
 But thoughts of Injuries from him in Absence;
 And offer'd to my Mother—— from him I lov'd;
 My only becom Friend, that shou'd have made
 My Cause his own; so itung my Heart before,
 So wrought my fiery Temper up to Rage,
 That at his sight, I scarce knew what I did.

Pha. A poor Evasion of th Affront you've giv'n,
 To avoid its Punishment, I'll surely pay.
 The Time before I'll find——I will——till then——
 I will have naught to say to thee.

Ep. You know I do not fear you——but I'm calm.

Ch. O! my dear *Phaeton*! I do conjure thee
 (I wou'd command, but you've forgot Obedience)
 By all the Pains, and Fears I've felt for thee,
 To give me up thy Vengeance, and thy Anger.

Ep. I ask the same, tho not for Fear but Friendship.

Ch. O think that both a Friend, and Mother ask you!

Pha. He said, I was a Womans Property,
 A Tool——And can a Tool have any Friend?

Ep. I said it in my Rage, but cou'd not think it,
 The Injuries of such a one, cou'd never move me.

Pha. The wrong I did you, if I've done you wrong,
 I had not thought enough, that it was so,
 I was so lost in Love, else I'd not done it.
 For if there be a Love, above the Love
 Of Woman, sure it is the Love of Friends,
 And that I had for thee in its Perfection.
 If then a Fault, tho done without Design,
 Because a Friends, so touch'd the Friend in thee,
 How must thy bitter and reviling Words,
 Move such a Friend; wound such a Friend as me?

Ep. You were too Good, and I too rudely brutal?
 You gave too much to Friendship. I too little.

Pha. If thou think so, I gave not then enough;
 I should have burn more, much more, if possible!
 Or else have left thee till thou'dst been more calm——
 But that I thought your Friend shou'd not be brav'd,
 Perhaps I had been more passive. O! my Brother!
 You us'd me Harshly, —— but you are my Friend——
 And have a Right to chide me. O! *Epaphus*!
 Thy name has rous'd the Friend, which bears down all,
 And over-runs my Soul! canst thou forgive me?

Ep. Oh! canst thou ask it? ask it too of me?
 Who have offended most? Shame and Confusion
 Sink me—— Oh! let me kneel, and crawl into thy Arms.

The Fatal Divorce.

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I dare not chear my guilty Eyes with thine,
Till they with Tears have wash'd away my Stain.

Kneels and moves forward to him on his Knees embracing his.

Pha. (Taking him up.) Oh! rise my Friend, or I shall dye with shame.
Cleave to my Bosom with an unfeign'd Ardor!

Thou shalt o'come, this *Samian* shall be gone,
And bear this guilty Wretch away from *Egypt*.
Yes, I'll atone my Mother, Friend, and Country,
The Angry Gods too, with my just Exile.

Epa. Now Heav'n forbid!

No rather let ten thousand *Samians* stay,
Let rather the whole Race of *Argus* stay,
Than *Egypt* shou'd lose thee, the pride of Youth,
The Soldiers Courage, and the Virgins wish!
No by the Gods! I will my self step in
Twixt thee and Fate; appease my Mothers Rage,
Or in her Temple sacrifice her Son.

Pha. But his *Samian*!—

Epa. Now, by my Soul, do with her what thou wilt,
Give me but Friendship; firm me but thy Friend.

Pha. (embracing.) O! with more Joy than I wou'd grasp at Victory.

Epa. Ha! in that Word your Native Virtue spoke.—

I wou'd not, cou'd I help it, have my Friend,
Unlike the Son of the All-seeing Sun,
Lye thus obscur'd in Shades, in Groves, and Grotto's,
Averse to Glory, and inviting Greatness!
But mount himself to th' topmost spout of Fortune,
And meet the waiting Homages of Kings.
For as thy Father lights the world above,
So shou'd his Son rule all the World below.

Phae. And dost thou think that *Phaebus* was my Father?

Epa. Forget the barbarous Trespas of my Anger,
Or you will break my Heart. I know he is,
Your Deeds, your Virtues, and your Form confess him.
My conscious Soul is Witness that he is.

Phae. By all his awful Beams, I swear my Friend,
A vast, and unexperienc'd Joy strikes through me,
Fires all my Blood, and bounds thro every Vein,
Rolls in my Breast, and so exalts my Soul,
That I'm unable to contain th' Ecstasie.
To hear thee own me Son of the great Sun,
Extends my Limbs, and make me shoot aloft
To a more Godlike Stature. And now methinks
I tread in Air, and mount yon dazzling, Orb,
Exert my Father, and confess the God.
O! Mother! Friend! O! lead me out to Glory,
I'll shake this downy lethargy of Love
From off my Eyes, that thus forbids my Flight.

Epa. Ay now you do indeed exert your Father!
You look, you speak, you move, you are a God!
To fire you more; I bring you joyful News,
The Crowns of *India*, and of *Egypt* wait you;
Stretch out your Hand, and set em on your Head.

Pha. You speak mysterious Wonders, be more plain.

Cly. Thus long I've stood, by joyful Wonder fixt,
To see the powerful Motions of your Friendship
Working on to this blest Union. Now
I tell you, that your Friend, and Mother bring you
Love, untasted Beauties, and a Crown!
Lybia, my Son, the Charming *Lybia*!

Pha. What?

Says my Mother? how knew you that I lov'd her?
Althea's self ne'r yet found out that secret.

Cly. I knew not you lov'd her, but she loves you;
And I'm o'rejoy'd to find the Passion mutual.

Pha. Oh! you attack me with such subtle Arts,
You must, you will o'recome. A Crown! and *Lybia*!
The Force is too resistless! But *Althea*!

Ep. Let not that worthless Woman cross thy Thoughts.

Pha. O! do not call her Worthless! She has Worth,
Eternal Love and an immortal Truth!

She sav'd me from her Fathers barbarous Rage,
And lov'd me so, she fled from him with me.

Ep. It was a wanton Girls thoughtless Trick,
And 'twas her Folly what you call her Love,
To leave her Friends, to fly with a young stranger.

Clym. It was her Crime—— for she betray'd her Father,
E're she deliver'd you.

Ep. Then add to that,

It was her Father slew your guiltless Friends,
Against all Rights, both humane and divine.

Pha. Again, she sav'd me in *Alphenor*'s Court,
By treacherous means, when he had bound me fast,
She snatch'd the Dagger from his lifted Hand,
And struck it to his Heart.

Ep. She was not free. So very plain the Choice
'Twixt Age, and Youth; my Friend, and old *Alphenor*;
A petty Tyrant of an *Asian* Village,
And the young blooming Pride, and Hopes of *Aegypt*.

Cly. Where she did, she did compell'd by Love,
You owe to *Venus*, what you pay to her.

Ep. He has indeed o're paid her for a Trifle.
Thus long she has enjoy'd the Court of *Egypt*;
And fill'd her Bosom with a future God.

Pha. But oh! my Children!

Ep. Send her back with Gold
Enough to purchase a more noble Kingdom
Than was her Fathers, for her self, and Children.

Pha. But it will break her Heart!

Ep. O! think not so——

A Wife, and break her Heart to lose her Husband!

Cly. You have no other way to save 'em all:

The life of *Merops* is bound up in *Lybia*,
And hers in thee.

Pha. Ha! does she love me so?

Cly. More, more than I can tell thee. She's impatient;
Not having seen thee now so many hours.

Pha. O Friend! haste, and bring me to her!
For I'm impatient too! I long, I sigh, I burn!

I am unpardonable by the least Delay,
And lose an Age of Pleasure, in one moments stay.
With furious Love I'll rush into her Arms,
And rise a God from her immortal Charms.

The End of the Second Act.

ACT III.

SCENE the same Grove, at the end of it an Arbour, in it Althea,
in a very melancholy posture; her Maids attending without. Music
is heard, and Juno, and Hymen, with their Trains descend.

Juno. O Hymen! must we always see
Perjur'd Man thus faithless be, }
And still securely slight our Deity?
Must Vows and Oaths by man be sworn,
And then be never thought on more?
In vain our Votaries seek our Aid,
If thus they still must be betray'd.
Hymen. These crimes unpunish'd must not go:

No longer delay,
But call just Nemesis away,
From her dismal shades below:
To her Almighty Fate allows
To punish broken Vows.

Chorus. Come come, just Nemesis away,
Too long your justice you delay.

Nemesis and her train of Furies ascend.

Nemesis. Grieve, grieve no more, nor sigh in vain.
Revenge alone can ease your pain.
Revenge affords a sure Relief,
While Love alas promotes your Grief.

Chorus. At the hiss of their Snakes let that passion retire,
That more noble revenge that Bosom may fire.

In this Chorus they dance and shake their Snakes over
or towards Althea, then descend—

Juno and Hymen with their Train ascend, and then
Merope and Cassiope come forward.

Cass. Methinks Strange sounds fill all the Ambient Air.

Mer. Of late too frequent have the Portents been,

Boding, I fear, some fatal Evil to us,
Which now alas! appears too imminent
In Phaeton's forsaking our poor Lady.

Cass. Ah! Merope! that this inhumane Man
Had never landed on our Samian Coast.
That prosperous Winds, and Seas had born him safe
To Delos, Claros, or to any place
Far from unhappy Samos.—

Mer. O! my Cassiope! that he h'd been sunk!

For ever sunk in the devouring Tempest !
 Or that h' had perish'd too in the *Samian* Dungeons !
 Then had our Princess never been thus wretched,
 By a too fatal, and too tender Love
 For an ingrateful, and a false deceiver.
 Then had *Althea* never left her Country,
 For the proud Piles of these *Egyptian* Palaces;
 Nor on precarious Favours here depended ;
 Nor on the fickle Passion of a faithless Youth.

Cass. Surcharg'd with the too pondrous Weight of Evil,
 Thus fixt she sits, her down-cast streaming Eyes
 Dissolving in a constant Flood of Tears.
 Sometimes, with sighs, she wrings her tender Hands,
 Then casting up to Heav'n her watry Eyes,
 In soft Laments, and most pathetic Murmurs,
 Condemns her self for having left her Country,
 Her Father, Friends, and Household Gods, for one,
 For one, who thus inhumanely deserts her.
 Deaf as the Rocks, or Winds, or raging Seas,
 She'll hear no Counsel, and admit no Comfort.

Mer. Alas ! how will she bear the approaching Evil.

Cass. Ha ! What is't you say ? more Evils yet ?

Mer. The Tyrant *Merops*, Father to her Rival,
 Unsatisfy'd with all the brutal Orders
 Sent by his Messengers——now comes himself,
 To drive her, and her Children out of *Egypt*.

Cass. Will *Phaeton*, tho weary of his Wife,
 Suffer his Children to be sent to Exile.

Mer. This new Alliance, takes up all his Thoughts,
 He has no Memory of his past Love,
Althea's Tenderness, or his broken Vows.

Cass. O ! hard condition of poor Womankind !
 Made Slaves to Mans imperious changeable Will !

Mer. O ! cruel Custom ! O ! too partial Laws,
 That give to Man an Arbitrary Pow'r,
 To throw us from him, when his Fancy veers,
 And points him to another !

Cass. Hold——See she rises and comes forward.

Alth. Ah ! me !——Alas !——*(Althea rises and comes forward.)*
 Undone, undone ! forsaken !——
 Weep, weep fond Eyes ! dissolve, dissolve in Tears !
 You let the fatal Mischiefs in !——Oh ! woe !
 Oh ! Misery ! Oh ! Ruin !

Cass. Have Patience, Madam, my Lord still loves you.

Alth. No, no, he's false !——he's chang'd !——he loves no more !
 For when he lov'd he scarce wou'd er be from me ;
 Or if he left me, swift was his return,
 And still preventing the appointed Minute.
 But now how many tedious Hours are gone !
 And yet he comes not——comes not, tho I've sent
 To beg his Presence——Nay he does not send
 To ease my Pain or contradict my Fears——
 My Fears !——alas ! my Ruin is too certain !
 The common talk of every busy Courtier !
 Am I not pointed at, and thunn'd by all ?

Already twice commanded to be gone
From Egypt, and from him ! Despair and Horror !——
Relentless Powers, hurl, hurl your Thunder down
On my devoted Head ! propitious fates
Cut off, cut off my thread of wretched Life ! *(Walks up and down in a discompos'd and mournful manner.)*

Cass. O ! wond'rous Pow'r of Woe to make us wish
For Death, which is by Nature most abhorr'd !

Alb. O ! mighty *Themis* ! O ! holy *Artemis*. *(kneels.)*
Ye awful Powers that Guardians are of Vows,
Do not my Husbands impious Deeds provoke you ?
He breaks thro' all your sacred Ties of Oaths,
To the curs'd Joys of a new nuptial Bed. *(Rises.)*
Sink, sink, detest, tumble down the Tyrants Palace
On him, on her, on every guilty Cause
Of my unmerited, my dismal Ruin—— *(pauses.)*

Oh ! my Father ! oh my poor widow'd Mother !
Oh ! my dear lost Country all abandon'd !
All forsaken ! for the false perjur'd *Phaeton* !
Mer. Indulge not thus a passion, whose Violence,
If you give way, must bear down Life before it.

Alb. What use of Life have I, that I shou'd spare it ?
Robb'd of my peace by this enormous Evil ?
That dear false Man, within whose faithless Bosom
Was all my Hoard of Joy, alas has left me !
Left me alone, forlorn, of Friends bereft,
Beset all round with Foes !——in a strange Land,
Naked of needful helps, no Refuge near me !
No Country, Brother, Father, or Mother here ;
To who from th' impetuous Storm of Sorrows,
As to a welcom Harbour I might steer.
I'm lost ! I perish ! taste the Sours of Death,
Ev'n while I live ! Oh ! let me taste its Sweets
In Death itself, and so forget my Woe !

Cass. I beg you for your Childrens sake be calm.

Alb. My Children ! ha ! my Children did you say ?
The joyful product of our mutual Love ?
They re part of him, and of his barbarous Sex——

Pauses and walks thoughtfully up and down, starting now and then.

——Avert——avert the thought ye Powers Divine.
Alas they're innocent ! and wrong'd like me,
Like me forsaken, and undone like me !
No let th' Offending only feel my Anger !

Mer. Ay, give it Vent, on those discharge your pain.
It is our Sexes Quarrel, Womankind
However fearful else, will here be bold,
And with confederate Mischiefs back your Vengeance.

Alb. Vengeance ! Vengeance ! alas ! I love too much !——
My wrongs are great, but oh ! my Love is greater !
When his dear Image comes before my Mind,
False as he is, my Rage ebbs out apace,
And Love in a full Tide of Tenderness flows in.

Merop. For *Lybia's* Lover ? and for your Betrayer ?

Alb. For *Lybia's* Lover ? Oh ! the very Thought
Strikes Dagger thro' me, and alarms my Soul !

Rouzes my injur'd Heart to hateful Mischief!
 I cannot, will not bear it.—Ha! *Her Father's Ghost arises, and she starts back, and gazes as affrighted.*

Ghost. Bear it not.

Alth. O! all ye Gods! and heavenly Pow'rs protect me!
 O! *Juno* guard me from this dreadful Vision!

Mer. O! gracious Heav'n restore her wandring Senses!

Cass. Tho I see nothing, yet a trembling Horror
 Shakes me all o're.

Alth. O! Gods! see yet he stays and glares upon me!

Ghost. Let not the Image of thy Father fright thee!
 I come not now to punish, but assist thee!

At least as far as cruel Fate allows.

Fear not, but hear me!

Alth. O! thou paternal Shades! O! *Hierax!* Father!

Father (for yet that kind indulgent Form

Speaks Tenderness, that merits that dear Name)

Can you? O! can you, yet forgive my Flight?

My guilty Flight? that bore me from my Father,

My Hopes, my Happiness! my Innocence!

But oh! severely have I suffer'd for it,

Pierc'd through and through with most ingrateful wrongs!

Ghost. Too strong, *Althea*, were the just Impressions

Thy Virtue made upon a Father's Soul

For Death to raze.—

Our Passions are immortal, as our beings,

A part Essential of them, for without them

There is no Pain, nor Pleasure; Bliss, nor Woe;

I blame not then thy Flight, compell'd by Love,

That o're the young maintains a Tyranny.

I blame thee not for Love, but for thy Tameness;

For bearing Wrongs from this *Egyptian* Race.

The injur'd Genius of thy native Country

Calls loudly on thee for Revenge, Revenge.

How long? how long must our unhappy *House*

Call for Revenge in vain, in vain from thee.

Egypt's the Source of all our *Houses* Woe.

For *Isis*, *Argus* falls; I for *Phaeton*;

For *Lybia* thou. *Juno* and *Hymen* both

Demand Revenge for violated Vows.

Juno herself assists thy just Revenge

Revenge! Revenge! Revenge! — *Sinks down.*

Alth. Oh! stay—Oh! do not fly so swiftly from me!

Take not away so soon that pious form,

That pleasing Image of paternal Love,

That touch'd with Care of his unhappy Daughter,

Burst from the peaceful Mansions of the Dead,

To rouse my Justice and accuse my Tameness;

This poor Insensibility of Wrongs!

I feel my Father roll through all my Veins,

Rage in my Blood, and fire my doubting heart!

Revenge! Revenge, Revenge it was he cry'd

Justice, and Pity demand revenge.

My Country, Father, and the Gods demand it.

Cass. O! Gods appease this Fury of her Mind!

Mer. Revenge is the best ease the Gods can give her.

Alth. Revenge ! Revenge ! it gives some taste to Life
Nor am I wholly wretched while I can

Revenge my Wrongs, and punish my Undoer.—

Inform, advise, instruct, direct my Fury,

While yet my mind is capable of acting.

Yes I will live.— but live for speedy Vengeance,

Great as my Causeless Wrongs, on him, on her ;

On her the curs'd Usurper of my Bed :

On *Merops*, *Clymene*, and all the Guilty House.

Cass. Might I advise ; I'd leave him to the Gods,
Nor think more of him.

Alth. How ! not think of him while yet he wrongs me ?

While yet he slights and leaves me for another ?

No I'm all Rage, whole *Nemesis* is in me !

And I'll pursue him with immortal Hate,

Revenge my Injuries, tho I fall my self.

Mer. But hold.— Compose your self— hide your concern ;

For see th' *Egyptian* Tyrant *Merops* comes.

Please not his Eyes with Griefs you shou'd not own

To their vile cause — till your Revenge is sure.

Enter Merops, Guards and Attendance.

Merops. How long must I command you hence in vain ?

Weak Monarchs thus are Brow-beat by their Slaves,

When they forget to see themselves obey'd.

Therefore depart — immediately away,

For hence I'll not remove till you are gone.

Alth. Protect me Heav'n ! this blow compleats my Ruin.

Ah ! me ! to whom ! Ah ! whither shall I turn ?

When thus I fall on every side most wretched.

Merops. I have no leisure now to hear you rave

Impatient of your hated sight — be gone —

Ease me and mine of this most odious Burden.

Alth. Thus low, oppress'd with such a Weight of Woe,

Permit me ask the Reason of my Exile.

What new ! what sudden motive cou'd I give,

A helpless Woman, and of All forsaken ?

Merops. Let it suffice I fear thee ;

(For mean disguises are below a King)

I fear you'll plot some Mischief against my Daughter,

And for these Fears you are a fertile Cause.

Asia and *Europe* yield too fatal Proofs,

With what impetuous Fury 'tis you love ;

And how my *Lybia* ought to dread your Rage,

Since you're divorc'd for her, from *Phaeton*.

Alth. I grant, that forc'd by Loves Almighty Pow'r

I dard above my Sexes softer Temper

For him that said, nay swore too that he lov'd me

Above his Life, his Life ! above his Glory.

Yet think not *Merops*, think me not so mean,

So very fond to love when I am slighted.

What e'r I did for him when yet he lov'd,

I nothing shall attempt for him that hates.

Nor boots it me who loves, or who's belov'd,

Since he loves me no more, since he hates me.

Go on, proceed, consummate their Espousals ;
Live long ; live happily ; I envy't not.

Allow this Wretch alas a sad Retreat.
A shelter against worse Fortune's all I ask.
In secret only I'll on him complain ;
Murmur the pangs of my expiring Love.
Where soon I'll learn to yield him up to her,
That more deserves him, than my self.

Merops. Your Words a specious Mildness only bear,
I fear the deadly Rancour hid within.
For with more Ease w' oppose the Lust of Vengeance,
When it appears in its own native fury,
Than when disguis'd in smooth submissive Words.
Therefore be gone——nor think with subtle Speeches
To change my Will ; thy Exile is decreed ;
Nor shall thy cunning Arts reverse thy Doom.

Alth. Oh ! I will clasp your Knees : O Sir ! by these, *She kneels, !*
By the new Pair I beg, I do conjure you—— *and clasps his knees.*

Mer. You beg in vain, all you can say is lost.

Alth. It is unkingly to reject a Suppliant.

Mer. It is unjust to prize you 'bove my Family.

Alth. O ! my Country ! 'tis now, 'tis now, 'tis now, alas !
That I remember thee !

Mer. That you shou'd ne'r
Have suffer'd to escape your Memory.

Alth. O Love ! destructive plague to womankind !

Mer. Yes, when pursu'd against a Parents will.

Alth. O ! *Jupiter !*

Remember who was the Author of all this !

Mer. Trifler be gone, and free me from my Cares.

Alth. 'Tis me, 'tis me alone hat Cares oppress ;
Nor need I more to make me wholly wretched.

Mer. Be gone I say, or Slaves shall drive you hence.

Alth. O ! *Merops* hear me ! yield to my Request !

Mer. In vain you strive to break my fix'd Resolve.

Alth. No, I will go——I aim not by my Tears
To bend your Stubborn Mind to let me stay ? *Rises*

Mer. What wou'd you then ? Why leave you not my Kingdom ?

Alth. Give but a day to fit me for my Journey.

And since their Father has forgot his Children,

Permit me give em the best Help I can.

Ah ! pity them, for you've had Children too !

As you're a Parent let a Parents sorrows

Touch you——Young, tender, and unus'd to Hardships,

As you well know I am ; yet, O ! *Merops !*

I am not griev'd for my own Banishment,

But the Misfortunes that attend my Infants,

My little helpless Babes ! my early Orphans,

Orphans, while yet their Father is alive.

'Tis these torment me, these that rack my Soul.

Mer. That I'm not rul'd by an obdurate Mind,

Let this convince you ; your Desire is granted.

Yet hear me, Woman, hear, and mark me well,

If then to morrows Sun do find thee here

Thou dy'st, thou and thy Children surely dye, *Exit Merops cum suis.*

Mer

Mer. Alas! unhappy Mistress!
 What will you do? or whither will you fly?
 To unexperienc'd miseries expos'd?
Cass. Whose Friendship? or what Nation will you seek?
 What Hospitable coast against your sufferings?
Alth. 'Tis true, my Friends Ill-Fortune does surround me,
 Yet think not that I'll lose this last success.
 Think you I could have couch'd so to the Tyrant?
 Have been His Suppliant? held to Him these Hands?
 Had not my hopes of Vengeance bent my Knees,
 Soften'd my Language, and thrust out my Arms?
 Besort'd *Merops* shou'd have driv'n me hence,
 Not giv'n a Day! a Day's a mighty Space,
 Enough to Sacrifice all, all my Foes,
 The Daughter, Father, Mother, Son
 My perjur'd Husband! Where shall I begin?
 Amid this Crop, this Glut of my Revenge?
 Shall I set fire to their curs'd Nuptial Bed?
 Or with this Dagger pierce their guilty Hearts?
 No, by more subtle Arts I must prevail,
 Deceit with the Deceivers shou'd not fail;
 Yet if this do not, as it ought, succeed,
 I with this Hand will do the dreadful Deed:
 Amid their Guards, in the full face of Day,
 Nor Heav'n nor Hell shall stop my furious way;
 I'll wound, I'll stab, transfix their conscious Hearts; *Jauset.*
 From me they shall be sure of their Deserts.
 With joy I'd dye, and as in Triumph fall;
 If with my pondrous Fate, I crush'd them all. *Exeunt Omnes.*
The End of the Third Act.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*Enter Phaeton on one side, and Althea on the other,
 attended by her Maids.*

Phae. **M**OV'd by my Love, I come, unkind *Althea*,
 To mourn, and to provide for your sad Journey;
 For I can't wish you Evil, tho you hate me.

Alth. Then you are come? you dare approach me then?
 O! worst of Men! most guilty of thy kind!
 (For want of Pow'r allows me but Reproaches)

'Tis not assurance, but vile Impudence,
 That brings you to a Friend, you so have wrong'd.
 And yet 'tis well, 'tis just, that you are come,
 That I may vent m' imprison'd Griefs on thee,
 And with contagious Sorrows blast thy joys.

Phae. Madam, I have no joys, while you're in Pain.

Alth. First (for I'll begin with my first Benefits)
 I sav'd your Life (nor can you yet deny it)
 When in one Night your Guiltless Friends were slain,
 Then you Ingrate, then you too shou'd have dy'd.

In pity of your untimely Fate.

I Snatch'd you from my angry Fathers Rage,
And set you free-- O! that I h'd done no more!
But press'd by my ill stars, o're pow'rd by Love!
By artful sighs, and your unmeaning Vows,
At once his Hopes, and Vengeance I betray'd;
Not only gave you life, but fled too with you.
— Again— in *Asia* where I might have reign'd,
Neglecting still all interests of my own,
To save your Life I slew the King *Alphenor*.
And fled again by Night thro Foes and Dangers,
And rho I fled from, what you seek, a Crown,
I fled well pleas'd because I fled with you.

Phae. Yet hear me; and be patient while I speak—

Alth. I took all Fears from you, and in Return
Of such, so many Benefits have you?
Have you betray'd me? O! Prodigy of Falsehood!
Made by my fruitful Love now twice a Father,
In all my youth, in all my Spring of Beauty
To leave me for another!
O! my false Joys! O! disappointed Hopes!
How have I been deceiv'd; O! how abus'd!
Thinkst thou there are no Gods, that heard thy Oaths?
Or thinkst thou, they want Power to punish Crimes
Like thine? O! Hands! O! Knees! so often press'd
In vain in vain by his protesting Hands

Phae. Would you but hear I should not seem thus Guilty.

Alth. I'll calmly reason with you like a Friend,
As if I hop'd some Benefit from you.
Whither shall I go? to whom shall I return
Cast off by you? What to my native Country?
That I forsook for you! what to my Father?
Alas! he's dead! kill'd by my guilty Flight!
I was the only Pleasure of his Age,
His prop, his stay, and when I fled, he fell,
And left his Throne to my inveterate Foes.

Phae. Yet hear me speak, and then condemn or quit me!

Alth. Or shall I fly to slain *Alphenor's* Court?
Where for his Death, I shall be kindly treated.
You bid me go, but cut off all Retreat.
My native Friends that merited no evil,
For thee I've lost, for thee I've made all Foes!
And now for all these fatal proofs of Love,
I'm thrust a Vagabond to the wide World.
Defenceless, Widow'd, Friendless, and alone!
Or what is worse, with my two helpless Orphans.
If this must be, O! think but how 'twill sound,
At your new Nuptials, that you've driv'n to exile
Your Children Beggars, with that tender Wife,
To whom you owe the life you use against her.
O! *Jupiter*! why hast thou giv'n to Gold,
A certain Test to know the true from false,
And yet in Man hath fixt no certain Mark,
To know the Good from Evil?

Phae. I find you've drawn a dreadful Charge against me,
And such as Guilt cou'd never hope to Answer,

Yet, fortify'd with Innocence, I dare
Appeal to your own self to judge my Cause.
Lay but your Passion for a while aside
And tell me who? who caus'd this mournful parting?
Alth. Ask thy self that Question? ask thy own Heart.

Pha. It was not I, I sought not this Divorce.
The Gods, the angry Gods would have us parted,
Witness ye Pow'rs! how long I did oppose you!
Struggling with Fate, my Mother, and my Country,
Before I yielded up a Prize like this.
The hoary Priests of *Isis* threatn'd *Egypt*,
With Evils imminent, with Plagues, with Famine,
Unless that you were banish'd—And the *Nile*
Withdrew its fertile Streams within its Bed,
And shrunk its noble Flood into a Brook.
In vain the holy Priests mourn'd drown'd *Osiris*,
With thorn Locks, and dismal Cries in vain.
A Successor they sought to the white God!
All was deny'd till you was driven from *Egypt*.
What cou'd I do? or how cou'd I deny

My Friend, my Mother, and my falling Country?
Alth. If this were so, why left we not this *Egypt*?
Why should my Banishment from *Egypt* part us?
We had been wanderers together before this!
Nor Gods, nor Priests, requir'd that you should stay,
And Love, and Benefits, and Vows, and Oaths
Oblig'd you to go with me.—

But these are Feints, weak Blinds to hide their Guilt,
'Tis *Lybia* is the God compels your stay!
'Tis *Lybia* drives *Althea* out of *Egypt*!
'Tis *Lybia* is the dreadful Fate that parts us!

Pha. Be calm a while, and give me leave to speak.
I will not urge the Love that *Lybia* bears me,
(Tho that, I swear, would move another strangely)
The Crowns she brings (tho I was born for Crowns)
I will not urge, for these are foreign Motives:
It was for you I yielded to these Nuptials.—

Alth. For me! for me you left me for another!
O wretched Trifler!

▶ *Pha.* Pray hear me out——
You ask what God? what Priests require my stay?
Why you, *Althea*, are the God compels it.
Knowing the Hardships of a Friendless Exile,
How could I bear to see *Althea* perish,
And have it in my Power to ward her Fate?
My Children too, sprung from that beauteous root,
Attackt my Heart, and with resistless force,
Tore me from what my Soul desires most!
For Me, you've made too many Foes already,
And should I then add to their fatal Number?
If *Asia* and *Samos* are provok'd for me,
Should I dare *Egypt* too, to fix your Ruin?
Alas! if I go with you I destroy you,
If I stay here, I'm but my self unhappy,
And by my pain provide for you and yours.

'Tis Death to my Desires to lose *Althea*,
 But 'tis Damnation to undo her more.
 Yet would I go, the Pow'r of *Egypt* stops me,
 The Pow'r drives you hence, that confines me here.
 Come calm that Rage (which yet I cannot blame
 Because it shews you Love me) and consider
 That by this match the Wealth of *Egypt* is yours,
 For what is mine is so. By which ill-Fortune
 Will follow you in vain, but never reach you:
 Contending Nations will with Pride invite you
 That know your Interest in the Prince of *Egypt*.

Alth. How easie 'tis to give us Words for Deeds!
 No more with specious Arts disguise the truth;
 The fulsome Dawb too visibly is seen.
 If 'twas for me you did these wondrous things.

Why was the secret kept thus long from me?
 Who first shoud have been won to yield you to her.

Phae. How cou'd I plead a hateful Cause with you?
 I cou'd not wish to gain ev'n from my self?

Alth. These are invented Causes, not the real;
 Your proud aspiring Soul disdain'd my Bed,
 Because I brought no Kingdoms for my Dowr.

Phae. Believe the brave Ambition of my Soul.
 Wou'd not permit me to forgo my Love,
 For any Cause, but what I have assign'd,
 Your Childrens, and your Happiness —

Alth. Give me no Happiness that's mixt with Woe,
 Nor Wealth and Pow'r that rack my Soul with Grief.

Phae. Opinion only makes you here unhappy,
 Who in the midst of Plenty think you're Poor.

Alth. Delude me on with Words, you've got a Refuge,
 And you grow eloquent upon it: But your Deeds
 Your Deeds are more emphatic: am I not
 Forsaken? with my Children forc'd to Exile?

Phae. To ease that Care take largely of my store,
 Rich presents to our Friends to recommend you.

Alth. I'll use no Friends of thine, nor touch thy Gifts;
 The Gifts ill men bestow advantage none.

Phae. By the refulgent God, that gave me being!
 My Father *Pachus*! —

Alth. Thy Father! thine! th' illustrious God disdains thee.
 Thy Father! 'twas a boast of thy false Mother.
 By which she wou'd conceal her guilty shame.

Phae. No more — for yet I call the Gods to witness.
 I'd pour into your Arms what e'er you want,
 Both for your journey, and your after Ease;
 Tho you to your own detriment refuse it.

And with injurious Language drive me from you: *Exit.*

Alth. Go, go, make haste, to your new Bride make haste!
 Too long I've kept you from her wish'd-for sight.
 Go on, go on, Consummate your new Nuptials,
 Yet if the Gods but lend a pitying Ear,
 You soon shall wish you never had prepar'd 'em.

Walks up and down in a Passion.
Cassi. If once, O! *Venus*! I must feel thy Power.

Far be this racking Violence of Passion!
A Love more gentle in my Soul inspire!
Calm be my Joys, temperate my Desire!
Easie the soft Emotions of my Heart!
Or if they must be fierce, Oh! make 'em short.
My inclinations veering, as the Wind,
In change preventing that false roving kind!

Alth. O! *Juno*! early Guardian of my youth,
And sacred Pledge of our Connubial Vows,
If e'er my Off'rings have been grateful to you,
I do adjure you suffer not my Foes
To gather Joys from my opprobrious Grief!

Mer. Madam, transported by untimely Rage,
You've lost th' occasion that before you wisht for.

Alth. Ha!—thou sayst true— haste after *Phaeton* *Ex. Mer.*
And call him back, say what thou wilt to bring him.
Ungovern'd Fury at his sight burst out,
And almost robb'd me of my dear Revenge.

Althea summon all the Woman in thee,
The large Hypocrisy of all thy Sex,
And add to that the subtle Arts of Priests,
And Courtiers, when they'd make their vengeance sure.
Thou wantst them all, nay more if possible,
To smooth thy Brow, to calm thy Face and Eyes,
That not one glimpse of Rage to him appear.—

Away fond Love: ye tender Thoughts away!
I feel my Wrongs. Beware my Soul, beware!
Of leaving me the sport and jest of *Egypt*,
Th' By-word, and scorn of this *Barbarian Race*.
But hold— these Thoughts too much disturb me.
Let me have Music to compose my Mind.
Here in this mournful posture he shall find me.

Sits down and reclines her Head on her Hand.

Symphony and Song.

How happy wou'd poor Woman be,
From the Cares of Love still free,
Did not false Mans deluding Arts
Rob us of our Peace and Hearts.
With Tears and Oaths the Cheat maintain
Till we poor helpless women love again,
And wound our selves, alas! to cure their pain.
But then, ah! then! how soon they change!
How soon the sickle wanderers range!
How soon forget each Oath and Vow,
And to some other beauty bow!
Again they beg, again they pray,
On purpose only to betray.
Ah! seal my Heart! ye chaster Pow'rs,
Against their cunning Art,
And of my Lives succeeding Hours,
Ah! give to Love no Part.

At the end of the Song, Enter *Phaeton* and *Adrops*.

Pha.

Phae. Madam, I'm told you sent for me again,
Tho you are angry with me I obey,
And come with Joy to hear what you'll command me.

Alph. (Rising and coming forward) Forgive, my Lord, the outrage of
Nay I beg you, by our mutual benefits, [my Tongue]

Byour past Love (alas! that it is past!)
To pardon my Violence of Passion.
If I said ought too harsh, or to severe,
Think me a Woman, impotent of Reason,
That cou'd not see thro Pain my future Good,
And such a Pain, as to be rent from you;
My Soul, my All (for you were All to me)
Just in the fierce abundance of my Love.
Then add to this my little helpless Infants
Banish'd, and in the tender Bud expos'd
To nipping Blasts of an inclement Fortune.
Pardon these Tears, that Spight of me will fall
When e're this dreadful Image comes in view.

(weeps)

Phae. Excuse them not, they speak a noble Nature.
Alth. These Ills thro them transfix'd the Mother in me,
And work'd the raging Terror into Madness——
But now I'm calm, and Reason rules again,
I am convinc'd, that you have done most wisely,
Perhaps most kindly too!

(Sighs.)

I own your Care of me, and of my Children;
I own I've nothing to accuse but Fate.
And since our Stars will have it so, I'll bear it.

Phae. O: my *Althea*! I approve thy Grief,
Nor can I blame thy Rage; for both are just.
I swear thy Tenderness, and Love sh^d charm me
But that the Gods, have doom'd me to be Great
For thy Protection, I should leap down with thee
Into ignoble Ruin——

Nor think of my immortal Glory more.

Alth. Dissembling Villain! Oh! my Heart be calm!
Or I shall lose this only Hour of Vengeance! *Aside.*
Fool that I was, who cou'd not see my good.
Had I been wise, I had my self advis'd it,
And stood a glad assistant at your Nuptials.

But alas! I am a Woman! and tis
Below you to emulate me in Evil;
Or rail because I rail'd, I then was Mad,
But now I have consider'd, I consent,

- *Phae.* You do, *Althea*! like a tender Mother,
To share that Pain for them, I feel for you.
In this we both prefer the Good and Fortune
Of what we Love to our own fond desires.

Alth. Bring forth, bring forth my pretty Babes, bring me
To their Father to take their last Farewel.

*Enter two Maids with two Children, Althea goes to them, and as she
speaks takes hold of them and him alternately.*
Let him behold in these his double likeness.

Extend. extend your little Arms; embrace him,
Cling you about his Neck, and you about his Knees.

*The Maids apply each as directed, and Althea Kneels, and
takes hold of his Hands
Speak*

Speak to him tenderly ; and move his Soul !
Methinks ev'n now their Eyes, and Motions speak,
And with me beg your most peculiar Care.
Look on them well——do they not deserve it ?
Are these young tender Images of you,
Fit for the Hazards of a tedious Voyage ?
O ! my dear Children ! O ! my little Babes !
Must you so soon partake your Mothers Woe ?
Oh ! press him closer yet , and yet more close,
And with your melting cries excite the Father.

Children. O ! my Father ! oh ! good Father pity us !

Child. Father, what have we done to make you leave us ?

Have I done any thing to anger you ?

If I have been a naughty Boy, indeed

I'm sorry for't, indeed I am.

(Pomp of Sadness ?

Pha. (*speaking tenderly and mov'd.*) Rise, oh ! rise ! What means this
What wou'd these Tears ? What wou'd these dear Embraces ?

Embraces them all, takes up Althea, and the Maid and Child.

You cannot think that I can ever slight em ?

They shall, as my first Hopes, be my first Care.

And if the Gods but favour my Designs,

I once shall see them Princes here in *Agys*.

Grow up my Boys, and be your Mothers Comfort,

And my Glory.

(*She turns aside her head, and seems to weep.*

Why dost thou turn thy Beauteous Face away ?

And with stoln Tears bedew thy tender Cheeks ?

Why hear these wishes, with unwilling Ears ?

Alth. Nothing——'Tis a fond Mothers sudden pang
For her unhappy Children.

Pha. Let them not

Give you farther Grief : I'll take care of them.

Alth. I wou'd obey you——but I am a Woman——

A Sex, that's born for Tears.——Oh ! my Children !

Pha. But why so often call you on your Children ?

Alth. Indeed I cannot help it, for I bore 'em,

And brought them forth into this World of Woe.

And now must see them , e're they know what life is,

Expos'd, and driven upon a thousand hazards.

Perhaps there may be cause why I should go,

But what alarms can these afford the Court ?

Pha. What would you have me do ?

Alth. Implore their stay :

Beg it of *Alerops* with your utmost zeal.

While they're secure, within their Fathers sight,

The dearer half of me is free from Danger.

Pha. Well I will try, but can't assure success

Alth. VVhat cannot only Daughters do with Fathers ?

Employ but *Lybia*, and the Boon is granted.

Pha. I will——nor will she I believe deny me.

Alth. O ! I will help you in this grateful labour :

I have a Robe, that s wove by hands Divine,

Materials rich, as the fam'd story's artful :

Minerva's Tryal 'tis with bold *Arachne*.

This with a Crown of Gold by *Vulcan* wrought,

And giv'n by *Juno* to our fav'rite House ;

I will, with my two Children send to win her.
No Mortal can resist such powerful Bribes.

Pha. Rob not thy self of such unequall'd Treasures,
The *Egyptian* Court has wealth enough for her,
VVith whom my VVill outweighs a Mine of Gold.

Alth. You must permit me, Sir, to send them, for
VVere my life demanded for their stay,
I'd freely part with it, much more with these,
And Gold with Man's more prevalent, than duty,
The Gods make Fortune still attend on Gold,
As if their Blessings too were bought and sold.

Pha. Well then, *Althea*, you shall have your will.

Alth. I fly on all the Wings of swift desire,
To send this noble Ransom with my Children.

Pha. I will before to make their way more easy.

Alth. Now Gods befriend me, and one fatal Hour,
Shall venge my wrongs, and your affronted Pow'r.

The End of the Fourth Act.

Ex.

Ex. Omnes.

ACT V.

The Temple of the Sun. Enter Alth. disguis'd, with Cassiope and Mör
Alth. Give me a full account of all, that past.

Cass. Soon as your Gifts and Children reach'd the Presence,
Your Friends, that felt your Sorrows, were o'rejoy'd,
That *Phaeton*, and you were reconcil'd.

Alth. On to *Lybia*.—— of her I'd only hear.

Cass. Unmark'd by her (for she was fondly toying
With her new Lord, her Eyes fast fixt on his,
And darting wanton Wishes to his Soul)
We came up to her.—— Seeing us she started.
Sprung from his Arms, and turn'd away her Face,
As if the Gorgon sight wou'd make her Stone.

Alth. Gods! Gods! how I despise her petty Malice.
That reach'd my tender in offensive Children,
Yet she might fear them well; they brought her Death.

Nier. Averse she held her angry Eyes a while.
Till *Phaeton* thus mildly check'd her Scorn.

Receive my Friends with a more gentle Brow,
Think these a valu'd Portion of your Husband.
Receive their precious Gifts, and beg your Father
For my sake to remit my Childrens Exile.

Soon as her greedy Eyes had spy'd the Presents;
The dazzling Crown and Robe of heav'nly Make.
She cou'd deny him nothing, All was granted.
Upon her downy Hair he set the Crown,
And on her Shoulders fixt the flowing Mantle.

Alth. O! height! O! Masterpiece of dear Revenge!
To make my perjur'd Husband put 'em on,
And with officious Hands ensure her Ruin!

Cass. Proud of the glitt'ring Load, with haughty steps
She traverses the Room; and in the Glass,

VVith

With self-pleas'd Eyes, surveys her shining Form.

Alth. So the fond Victim to the Altar doom'd,
Bounds o're the Earth exalted with its Trappings,
Its sacred Wreaths, and holy Pomp of Death,
Unknowing that these usher its Fate,
So *Lybia* too.— For all those glittering Presents
Great *Juno* gave me, and she bid me send 'em
To my most hated Foe for sure Revenge.
Here in the Temple of the Sun I'll wait
To see my guilty Sacrifices fall.
Thus veil'd secure, within this hostile Roof.

*Enter Priests of the Sun, &c. and move gravely down,
one each side the Stage.*

Cass. The holy Priests already are advanc'd,
And see the Court, and Bride and Bridegroom come. *(They all Enter.)*

Alth. With guilty Joy they come, but shall return.
With an avenging Grief. I know the poison
Must have effect before the Rites are done.

*The Bridegroom places himself on one side the Altar, the Bride on
the other, and the rest in their order, then the Music begins ;
during which, Althea often looks on Phaeton.*

1st Priest. O ! sacred *Itis* ! and *Apollo* hear !

O ! bright Divinities give ear,

And shower your blessings on this Royal Pair. }

Repeat in a Chorus.

2d Priest. Look down bright God of day, look down,
On this fair Virgin, and thy Son.

Ease their Pain :

Increase their pleasure,

In soft Chains ensure their Treasure.

Give 'em joys, ah ! give 'em blisses,

Melting as their warmest wishes !

Chorus. O ! sacred *Phœbus* hear,

And shower your blessings on this on this happy pair.

1st Priest. *Itis*, by the pains Love cost you,

By the storms in which it tost you,

By the awful charms of love,

By the Transports of his Love.

Chorus. O ! sacred *Itis* and *Apollo* hear,

O ! bright Divinities, give ear,

And shower your Blessings on this Royal pair. }

After the Music, two Priests lead *Lybia* up to the Altar,
where she kneels down on a Cushion, and offers In-
cense, as she is leading up, *Althea* speaks.

Alth. Why beats my Heart thus ? what does love return ?

Why shou'd such tender thoughts besiege my Breast

Ev'n in the Act, in which he wrongs me most ?

Oh ! cou'd he yet repent, I cou'd forgive him :

For he has got a Friend within my Bosome,

Pleads for him with prevailing Eloquence.

Methinks too midst this outward formal Joy,

There sits a sort of sorrow on his Brow.

That flatters me, that I am yet within.

I'll try him——

And if he yet persists—then let him dye.

Goes up to him and pulls him aside.

My Lord !

While your fair Bride her Sacrifice performs

Permit me speak with you.

Phae. Some other Time.

Alth. It does concern your Happiness, and Life.

Phae. Come to me then, soon as the Rites are over.

Alth. 'Twill be too late.

Phae. No matter—then I'll dye.

No Fears shall interrupt my present Joy.

Alth. Gods ! how he's transported !—one moment, Sir.

Or midst your Joys you perish.

Phae. Prighee leave me.

Alth. I wish I cou'd ! but—you must hear me speak.

Pha. If I must hear you, I pray you be most brief.

For I've no time to trifle.

Alth. This way a little.

Seems to discourse him.

The Princess sinks down on her cushion before the Altar.

Priest. The Princess, help, the Princess faints away !

The Company gets about her, but Phaeton is stop'd by Althea.

Alth. You must not thither, for your Fate lies there.

Or if a Womans Death you long to see,

Turn ; oh ! turn your barbarous Eyes on me !

Unveils herself.

See your *Althea* perish at your feet !

Does no Remorse ? no pity touch you yet ?

Pha. *Althea* ! ha ! what means this fond relapse ?

Alth. Is then *Althea* quite forgot ? forsaken,

Cast off for ever ? here at least remember,

Before the Gods within their Roofs, your Vows.

[*Merops in the crowd.*] Ha ! she grows paler, see a sudden shivering

Has seiz'd on all her Limbs. Oh ! bear her quickly

Back to her Apartment. O ! fatal Nuptials !

All go off with the Princess.

Phae. Let go my Arm—my Princess is not well.

Alth. Your Wife is worse, your Benefactress worse.

Phae. Her sudden Ill has discompos'd me so,

I am unfit to reason with you now.

Alth. So griev'd for her ! so unconcern'd for me !

Gods ! sure you owe me more, than foolish *Lybia* !

Phae. Some other time will better suit your Madness ;

Now Love and Honour call me to my Princess.

Alth. Ha ! Love and Honour ! thou, alas ! hast neither.

What, Love and Honour call you from your Wife ?

From your Preserver ? from the Wretch you've made so ?

Phae. Grief fills my Soul so, there's no Room for Anger,

Or I shou'd chide th' impertinence away.

Alth. False Wretch ! beware, beware how you provoke me ;

A Qualm of Pity stopp'd thee from thy Ruin—

But have a Care.—

Phae. Then let your Cruelty strait send me to it,

If with my sickning Princess I shall find it.

Alth. Fond Man, here's Life, there certain Death attends thee.

Phae. Let me but go, I'll face that certain Death.

Alth. Hell ! and Furies ! how he slights my Love !

Is Death with her better than Life with me?

Phae. Since you will force the Secret from me——'tis.

Alth. Enough! enough! thou'lt without a Name!

Yes, false betrayer, yes, ingrateful Wretch,
You shall go to her—but you first shall hear
The Noble Vengeance, that you have assisted.

Phae. starting. Ha! Vengeance saist thou? and by me assisted!

Alth. I did not wrong thee in thy darling Office,
For Death, and Ruin are the just Returns
You're us'd to make for Tenderness and Love.

Phae. Ha! Death, and Ruin! O! my boding Heart!

Alth. When with the Crown and Robe you deck'd your Bride,
You dress'd the Victim of my injur'd Love.

You fix'd ten thousand Poisons on her Head,
And cloath'd her in inevitable Fate.

Ev'n now she breathes her last; now gasps for Breath,
Go reap the Fruit of Perjury in Death.

Clasp to thy fickle Breast her dying Charms,
And hug th' Infection in thy faithless Arms.

Phae. O! dire Revenge for what was kindly meant thee?

O! barbarous Woman, or fell Tygress rather.

More cruel far, than *Scylla*, or the *Sirens*,

Like the *Hyana*, and the *Crocodile*,

With false Laments, and artful Tears you kill—

But may th' avenging Furies soon o'ertake thee.

The Gods destroy thee, or the earth devour thee:

Heav'n pierce thee with its Bolts: Hell rack thee with its Tortures.

Alth. In vain you rave; in vain you vent your Curses;

What God, or Dæmon can regard your Pray'rs,

Perjur'd, as you are, by all their Deities?

Phae. They need not, for thy Guilt will always haunt thee.

Alth. My Guilt? Why I am wholly innocent!

Thy Crimes provok'd it, and thy Hands perform'd it.

Phae. My Hands? my Hands too shou'd revenge it.

Alth. If it be kind, or just thou canst not do it.

Phae. Thou'rt troublesome to me, and thy Speech is hateful.

Alth. We agree in this, for thine is so to me:

Go, go, and bury your expiring Bride.

Phae. Oh! Honor! Piety! Manhood now assist me!

Assist, thou bright paternal Fire, assist!

Or Rage unmans me: drives me to a Deed,

Will sully all my past, and future Glories.

Pansey.

Woman away—lest all shou'd be too weak

To guard thee from my Rage, my growing Madness.

Alth. This slighted Out-cast, this abandon'd Wife,

Alone, deserted, had the Pow'r, you find,

To sink the Pride of your injurious *Aegypt*;

And punish thee, 'midst thy fond security.

Phae. Woman, I say be gone—be gone! or yet—

Laying his hand upon his Sword.

Enter a Messenger in haste.

Mess. My Lord,

If you would see the Princess e'r she dye,

You must outstrip the Minutes in swiftest haste.

Phae. Thanks to thy call, I h'd lost my self in Rage;

Almost forgot my *Lybia* too.—I fly. *Is going.*

Alth. Fly, fly swiftly, to compleat my Vengeance.

Enter Epaphus hastily, meets Phaeton and stops him.

Phae. Whence is this frightful haste?

Epaph. I come to you,

But whence, alas! I come, I scarce dare tell you.

Phae. Speak boldly, for I am prepar'd to hear you.

Epa. But oh! I bring so sad a Tale, so near

Concerning you, you'll never bear it.

A tale so dreadful, and so full of Horror,

Will chill your Blood, and freeze you into Age.

Phae. Speak on—say *Lybia's* dead, and yet thou'lt see

I have a Godlike Virtue to support it.

Epa. You'll need it All, for 'tis from her I come.

Scarce had she reach'd the door of her Apartment,

When from her Mouth a white, but horrid Foam,

Spread o'er her lovely Face, her Eye-balls roll'd,

And wildly whirl'd about with dire Convulsions.

Silent she lay, or breath'd but piteous Sighs,

And piercing groans, till the first fit was over

Phae. Gods! how this staggers all my boasted Courage!

Was not her Death enough? but Tortures too?

Alth. Go on, for all my injur'd Blood it warms.

Epa. No sooner to herself she came, but saw

The blazing Crown belch out a fiery Deluge,

That prey'd upon her Hair, her Head, her Face;

From whence her Flesh like melting Wax ran down,

Mingl'd with Fire and Blood. Mean while the Robe

With fatal Rage devour'd her fainting Limbs.

Phae. How did she? nay, how cou'd she bear all this?

Epa. First starting up, she shook her flaming Hair:

From side to side she toss'd her burning Temples,

To dash the cleaving Gold from off her Head.

In vain, the more she shook, the more it fix'd, and burnt.

Phae. O! strange! O! miserable Fate!

Epa. But then o'er come by the prevailing Mischief,

Alas! she fell—but too unlike herself!

Gone were the rose Honours of her Face,

And fled the awful Lustre of her Eye.

Phae. O hapless Maid! O! wretched *Phaeton*!

Epa. All struck till now with the amazing Evil

Forbore to touch her; till th' unhappy Father,

Now starting from his Trance of sudden Woe,

Threw down his aged Body by her, clasp'd,

And kiss'd her—Then burst into these Moans.

O! my unhappy Daughter! what angry God

Deny'd thy pious hands to close my Eyes,

Even on this shut of Life? O! my poor Girl!

Gods that I might but perish with thee now!

He said no more, secure of being heard.

Phae. Oh! parent God support me or I fall!

Epa. But oh! the dreadful Contest that ensu'd

Striving at length to raise his tyr'd Body,

He stuck too fast to the invenom'd Robe

Ever to part from his consuming Child.

The Fatal Divorce.

31

He rends her Flesh and Bowels if he rises,
And if he stays immediately he dyes.
Few were the weak Efforts the Father made,
But soon his fainting Body by her Corps he laid,
He saw his Daughter in the Flame expire,
Then sunk himself in the same fatal Fire.
And then alas! sad *Ci mine*.—

Phae. No more.

I charge thee, by thy Friendship, say no more.
But cast a Veil of silence o're the rest.
I've heard too much, too much already—lend your hand.
The Ghastly Image sinks my floating Senses
I bore what man cou'd bear, but Ills like these
O'recome the God within me!

Faints away.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Where, where's the Prince? the Multitude,
Enrag'd at what the Royal House has suffer'd,
Forcing the Palace, with one common Voice.
Devote *Althea* to immediate Vengeance.

Alth. No, dull *Egyptian*, no, I am not born
To fall by their vile Hands, by base *Egyptians*.
This Dagger is my Safe-guard, and this Hand.
Protects me from that Infamy.

Cassi. O! Madam do not pierce your own dear Bosom!
This awful Temple will repel their Fury,
And gain you Time for a more gentle Fate.

Alth. Impossible! the Peoples Rage spares nothing.
Has no respect to Altars, or to Gods! —
Besides—Happiness has for ever left me,
And to live wretched, is much worse, than Death.
It is enough I've liv'd to see my Wrongs
Amplly revenged: I'll leave no turn to Fortune
To rob me of that Joy, but thus—

Cassi. O! stop your fatal Hand! (*As she stabs herself they seize
her hand, and wrest the Dagger from her, but could not
prevent a slight wound.*)

Merops. What have you done?

Alth. Do you conspire too against my Peace?
'Tis well the Daggers arm'd with double Fate,
I h'd mist my Aim else, now this scratch will do it;
What the Blow can't, the Poison will perform.

Epa. He breathes, go bear him gently to his Bed,
I'll but appease the people, and attend him. *They bear off Phacton.*

Enter another Messenger.

Mess. My Lord, the tumult now is grown too fierce
To be repell'd, or ev'n to be withstood.
Like Fire in Stubble driven before the Wind,
They bear down all.

Althea's Lodgings they've destroy'd already,
And tore her Children in ten thousand pieces.
Nor satisfy'd with this they rave for her.
And much I fear, unless she's found, their Fury
Will reach the Prince himself as her Concealer.

Epa. The Prince; alas! he feels too much already
Of this their common Woe.

(*Alth*.)

Mess. You they declare,
 As Son to their bright Goddess, King of *Egypt*.
Epa. The Crown, I own, is an illustrious offer,
 Yet not to be accepted by a Friend
 In a friends wrong, that is unworthy me. I will go to 'em
 Appease their fury with the Awe of *Isis*,
 Or fall my self to vindicate my Friend
 Fortune does ev'ry day dispose of Crowns,
 But Heav'n too seldom gives a faithful Friend. *Ex. cum suis*

Alth. Ha! *Merope*! what did the fatal Raven Croak?
 My Children! my dear Infants torn to pieces?
 O! dreadful News! O! cruel Rage! O! cursed *Egypt*!

Mer. 'Twas so, alas! he said!

Alth. Dead! are they dead! the pretty Orphans dead!
 Their Tongues that us'd to charm me with such Music,
 For ever silenc'd? And their sparkling Eyes
 Shut up, and clos'd for ever. *(Walks up and down discomposedly.)*

Cass. Grieve not too much for
 What you can't redress.

Alth. Yet the great Gods, that suffer'd all this Evil,
 Might have some mighty End, and Purpose in it.
 To prevent Ills hid in the Womb of Time.
 They took them innocent from this bad World,
 As yet incapable of Guilt, or Grief.
 For had they liv'd, perhaps they might have prov'd
 False as their Father, or like me unhappy.

Mer. Then grieve no more, for what the Gods have doom'd

Alth. But thus to 'dye! thus to be torn to pieces!
 Their Limbs dislever'd, their dear little Arms
 That have so often twist'd round my Neck,
 Their balmy Lips, that have so often kiss'd me,
 Mangl'd and torn to pieces by vile Slaves!
 By barbarous, curs'd *Egyptians*! O! pain!
 O! Torture! greater far than *Lybia* bore!

She faints away into their Arms.

This cannot, must not be! — Oh!

Cass. Oh! *Merope*! our wretched Lady's dead!

Mer. No—Life still struggles with grim Death within her:
 Her Heart with furious, and thick bearing Throbs
 Bounces against her Breast.

Bend her more forward—So she revives.

Alth. Stand off, and give me way, that I may fly
 Swifter than thought, to stop the murdering Hand
 Of Destiny.—Gods! Gods! I'm come too late!
 The Deed is done, their tender Threads are cut!
 Oh! for the pow'r of strong *Thessalian* Charms!
 To mock her Envy, and reverse their Doom!
 All will not do—they are for ever lost!

Mer. Alas! she raves, her Look and Motion's wild!

Cass. Alas! my Heart bleeds at the piteous sight!

Alth. Hiss—in your Ear. I've found the secret out.

Drawing 'em to her.

—Softly we'll creep to the black horrid Scene
 Of Infants Blood, and steal the precious Pieces;
 Gather them all, and carry 'em to the Gods

To fold them together—the Gods can do it.

Cass. What can we do to give her some Relief?

Merops. Oh! 'tis not to be done—Despair, and Poison—
Unite their Force to disappoint our Wishes.

Alth. Ha! th' unequal Gods deny the Boon!

Again disperse and scatter the dear Reliques,
I with such Pain, and Hazard have collected.

Pauses, and looks upward.

'Tis Guilt, not Innocence is now their Care;

For perjur'd *Phaeton* is born aloft,

And grows familiar with the partial Gods.

Mer. O! ye just Gods! remit her raging Grief!

Cass. Oh! that I could, by sharing it, abate it.

Alth. Ha! now he's leapt into his Fathers Seat!

He's seiz'd the fiery Chariot of the Sun.

But see the Steeds despise his feeble Rein,

And swiftly whirl him o're the Azure Plain. *pauses, looking fix'dly*

The Chariot burns! th' Heav'n's blaze, th' Earth's on Fire! *upward.*

See Athos, Ida, Taurus, Oeta Flame!

Hills and Valleys burn! Fountains and Streams dry up!

Stars, Earth, and Air are swallow'd up in Fire—

Ambition falls, see now he tumbles down!

The Precipice of Heav'n!—Oh! shield us *love!*

For now he comes directly on our Heads.

Breaks from them that endeavour to hold her, tears off her Head-Cloaths, &c. and her hair tumbles about her Shoulders.

Tear, tear, tear off these flaming Tresses,

These burning Garments, this catching Fuel!

Haste, haste into the Flood, or we consume!

Throws herself down.

So so, hark! hark! that Thunderclap has sav'd us!

See he's slain, he's motionless, he's dead!

Ha! how freezing cold he's grown already!

I've caught the shudd'ring Fit, it chills my Heart?

Oh!

Dies.

Re-enter Epaphus.

Epa. Here let the People wait till we return,

Speaks entering.

Too far already has their Fury bore 'em

Egyptians! Countrymen! see where she lies!

And let your Anger terminate with Death

But learn ye All from this too fatal Day

That *Love* o're Kings maintains an awful Sway.

All things are order'd by the Pow'rs above.

Against whose Will our Counsels fruitless prove.

In sad Events our wisest hopes we lose;

And what we can't expect the Gods produce.

Exeunt Omnes

F

T H E

ERRATA.

IN the Preface, p. 1. l. 22. r. *specious*: p. 2. l. 19. add of: p. 4. l. 40. r. *years*: l. 41. r. *Benefits*: p. 7. l. 30. r. *Reasonable*: p. 8. l. 21. r. *dam*. l. 35. l. *Identity*. In the Play p. 3. l. 22. r. *graceful*: p. 10. l. 10. add and: p. 11. r. *Godless*: p. 13. l. 30. r. *ber*: p. 16. l. 15. r. *Shade*: p. 39. l. 8. r. *crouch'd*: l. 15. add and *ber*: l. 16. dele *pauses*: p. 20. l. 1. add *to*: p. 22. l. 4. after *Pow'r* add *that*, and after *once* dele *that*: p. 24. l. 48. for *the* r. *them*.

THE EPILOGUE

Made by a Friend, and Spoken by Mr. Mills.

OUR Poet wanting some kind Friend in Vegue,
To give you the Defect of Epilogue;
His Stock being spent, has sent me here to borrow
Of you some Wit to write one for to morrow.
Stay let me see—Where shall I find this Wit?
Gad I'm afraid to venture on the Pit.
What if I hunted in the Side Bow Rows?
But who wou'd seek for wit among the Beaux?
O! there's a twisted Stinkirk—but his Wits plac'd
Preposterously from his Chin down to his Waste.
Below his head, if any where, I'm sure
His Brain can nothing but Pulvils endure.
There's one well powder'd, gad and he looks bigg—
And yet his Head is empty in a full Wigg.
I know him—he's an old Half-Ac Peeper,
A true Friend—I mean to our Door-keeper.
To plunder there's a sin of that degree
'Twou'd come within the Act of Immortality
But there's a Cit—I'm sure that he has None—
At least to spare—Unless upon a Loan,
And to begg there is a too vile Disgrace—
For City Security's writ upon his Face.
His Wit besides, another Way is Bent,
As how t' evade some Act of Parliament.
O! now I've found it—And he can't withstand it—
Death! 'tis a Soldier! and his Wit's disbanded.
No Beaux? no Wit! no sharper left to spark it,
What a Plague are they all gone to New Market?
Since he in vain here to the Men wou'd sue,
Our Poet, Ladies, throws himself on You;
His Inspiration seeks from your bright Eyes,
Those Charms wou'd make the dullest Spirits Rise.

FINIS